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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

JAMES MONTGOMERY,

INCLUDING

SELECTIONS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE, REMAINS IN PROSE AND VERSE, AND CONVERSATIONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

BY

JOHN HOLLAND AND JAMES EVERETT.

VOL. III.

" There is a living spirit in the lyre,
A breath of music and a soul of fire;
It speaks a language to the world unknown;
It speaks that language to the bard alone."

World before the Flood.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.
1855.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

CHAPTER XL.

1813.

MATTERS OF POPULAR EXCITEMENT AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF 1813. — "INSTRUCTION," AN ODE. — PUBLICATION OF THE "WORLD BEFORE THE FLOOD." — LETTER TO ROSCOE. — CONVERSATIONS. — OPINIONS OF THE POEM. — IMITATIONS FROM THE ITALIAN. — SUNDAY SCHOOLS. — MONTGOMERY'S FIRST SPEECH FROM A PLATFORM. — GEORGE BENNET, ESQ. — LETTER TO REV. IGNATIUS AND MRS. MONTGOMERY. — METHODIST MISSIONARY MEETING. — REV. RICHARD WATSON. — SMEDLEY'S "RELIGIO CLERICI." — REVIEWS TIGHE'S "PSYCHE," AND SCOTT'S "ROKEBY." — DEATH OF SPENCER. — LETTERS TO DR. RAFFLES. — ADDRESS TO THE PRINCE REGENT.

"At the commencement of a new year, we may venture, in a still, small voice, while the thunder, and earthquake, and fire of war are gone by for a moment, to whisper to our friends, as our conscience whispers to ourselves, 'remember that one thing is needful; choose, therefore, that better part, which shall not be taken away from you.' What that 'one thing' is, we all know, or we all may know: how awfully, how eternally 'needful' it is, none can fully comprehend but those who have felt the want or the blessing of it in the

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hour of death, and who will again feel the want or the blessing of it in the day of judgment." Such were the sentiments with which the editor of the "Iris" met his readers at the beginning of 1813.

The principal public events which presently engaged his pen, were the destruction of the French army after a series of disasters, commencing with the frightful retreat from Moscow in the preceding year; the vigorous prosecution of the campaign in the Peninsula; and the war with the United States—a war "as unnatural as between a man's right hand and his left;" the approaching renewal of the East India Company's charter, which Montgomery was anxious should include the permission for Christian missionaries to reside in our dominions in the East; and lastly—what, for the time, superseded every other topic—the ludicrously miscalled "Delicate Investigation."

So generally gratified were the parties who had the pleasure of hearing sung, at the Freemasons' Tavern, the poet's beautiful stanzas on the anniversary of the Royal British System of Education, last year, that he was again requested to compose an Ode for the current annual meeting of the friends of the same excellent institution in the month of May: with this request he complied, and the verses which appear in his works, under the title of "Instruction,"* were effectively sung by Mr. Braham.

On the 1st of May appeared the "World before the Flood, a Poem, in Ten Cantos; with other Occasional Pieces;" and a motto from Young—

> "Of one departed World
> I see the mighty shadow."—*Night Thoughts*, ix.

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* Works, p. 304.

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James Montgomery to William Roscoe.

"Sheffield, April 30. 1813.

"DEAR SIR,

"I take the earliest opportunity to forward to you a copy of the 'World before the Flood,' in its renewed form, as a sincere testimony of my esteem, as well as gratitude for your kindness in favouring me with your strictures on the poem in its first state. You will perceive that it is very much enlarged, but if it is not as much, nay more improved than enlarged, I have spent a great deal of time to little purpose. As I had no opportunity of revising the proofs, some provoking mistakes have crept into the text, which look as unsightly to me as children changed in their cradles by unlucky fairies appear to their distracted parents; but this is a fatality so inseparable from printing, especially printing from manuscript so vile and undecipherable as mine frequently is, that I blame nobody, and console myself that if such errors could escape the correct and curious eye of Mr. Ballantyne, not one reader in a thousand will detect them. I have, with a pen, altered those which I have found in one reading of the volume, which only came to my hands yesterday. I am not going to lay a task upon you, nor to ask anything but what you will be glad to grant, nay, what you would not be happy to withhold. I request you to make minutes of any blunders, either of the printer or the poet, which may *absolutely* require correction in another edition, should another be required. I know you will read with indulgence, and I know you will be pleased with some parts of the volume, however you may be compelled to censure, perhaps to condemn, others; because you will not look for faults for the pleasure of finding them, and humbling the author with the exposure of them; yet you will have the candour and the spirit to tell him fearlessly of any that will endanger his credit with honest men and liberal critics. I shall be saying too much if I say a word more, and there-

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fore it is well that I am in haste, and must conclude here. With best respects to your family,

"I am,
"Your obliged friend,
"J. MONTGOMERY.

"W. Roscoe, Esq., Allerton Hall, near Liverpool."

This work not only satisfied the large expectations of the author's friends, but elevated his name in the rank of those whom, at that time, the reading public delighted to honour. Prefixed to the poem, was an exquisite elegiac tribute "To the Spirit of a Departed Friend," — that friend, to whose faithful and judicious counsel the poem was, as we have seen, so much indebted for its ultimate form and finish — Daniel Parken.

"My task is o'er; and I have wrought,
With self-rewarding toil,
To raise the scattered seed of thought,
Upon a desert soil;
O for soft winds and clement showers!
I seek not fruit, I planted flowers."

Although the notion that works which "read smoothly" are produced, if not with as little effort, in almost as short a time, as they take in the perusal, has ceased to be common, there are still many who are scarcely aware of the toils, vexations, and anxieties of successful poetical authorship. We speak not of work contracted for at so much per sheet—of impromptu verse, destined to live for a week, or it may be for a month,—but of those creations of genius in which the hereafter—the *immortality* of the poet is involved. An author's repeated transcription of his manuscript;

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the conflicting, not to say impracticable, advice of his friends; the frequent adoption and abandonment of experimental alterations, are nothing to the general reader — nor, indeed, is it necessary they should be. It is enough if he be pleased or profited by a book in the production of which he had originally no contract or concern, and the merit of which, after all, can be but equivocally calculated from the time and labour it may have cost,—whether, according to the Horatian canon, it remain in the author's desk "*nonumque prematur in annum*"—

"Till the ninth ripening year mature its worth;"

or whether it may have been brought forth after the more ordinary gestation of as many months.

We have already seen that the "World before the Flood"* was originally projected and executed in *four cantos*. In this form, the idea, in its unity and action, simply related to the subjugation of the "giants" which were in the earth in "those days," by the "sons of God;" and in the conduct of which the poet endea-

* The title of Montgomery's poem may, perhaps, remind the reader of two earlier works:—"Travels before the Flood; an interesting Oriental Record of Men and Manners in the Antediluvian World, interpreted in Fourteen Conversations between the Caliph of Bagdad and his Court. Translated from the Arabic. London, 1796;" and "African Scenes before the Flood," by Dugald Moore. We recollect a literary lady pointing out with amusing gravity another coincidence, viz. that the names of the four principal writers on antediluvian themes began with M — Moses, Milton, Montgomery, and Milman! Who does not recollect Shakspeare's allusion to a resemblance built on the same theory — "M stands for Monmouth — so it does for Macedon?"

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voured, by a bold epic prosopopœia, to represent the triumph of true religion over the reign of wickedness. *Holland:* "In proceeding to recast the poem in conformity with the advice of your friends, was the original matter entirely broken up?" *Montgomery:* "Nearly so; Javan's song, including the apostrophe to twilight, and Jubal's account of the creation of woman, were exceptions: the present description of the death of Adam was not in the first design." *Everett:* "We should never have known what we had *lost*, if the poem had appeared in its original form, though we do know what we have *gained* by its reconstruction." *Montgomery:* "I certainly laboured upon the primitive design with the assurance of hope, and the confidence of achievement." *Everett:* "When that is the case, writing is pleasant. Did your original plan include the love episode of Javan and Zillah?" *Montgomery:* "Javan was one of my principal characters, and he performed an important part; but Zillah, and his passion for her, had no connection with it." *Everett:* "The conception, however, of the story as it stands, is a very happy one; and I have always thought the description of the sorcerer terrific." *Montgomery:* "The idea was partly suggested by a passage of a romance which I had read many years before; and where a knight, on his journey, meets with a lion enfolded in the coils of a boa-constrictor, a mighty struggle going on between the combatants: I laid hold of the serpent, in imagination, and twisted him around my wizard." *Holland* (pointing to a passage in the "Life of John Foster"): "Here is a curious record of a person said to have admired the character of Satan, which does not occur in the poem!" *Montgomery:* "And it is an equally curious instance of *taking a thing for granted* on the part of the biographer, who does not seem to be

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at all aware of the mistake: either he or the girl* must have confounded my giant with Milton's Satan." *Everett:* "You appear, in your delineation of Cain, to have had in view Nebuchadnezzar, as described by Daniel, chap. iv. verses 32—34." *Montgomery:* "I am generally glad to lay hold of a scriptural illustration—imagery from that source ought to be always welcome, as it is seldom improper in a sacred poem: right-minded readers are prepared to receive it with pleasure; nor is it any derogation from poetical originality, in such a case, to borrow from that fountain of wisdom to which almost every modern poet must be indebted, whether he acknowledge it or not." During the composition of this poem, Montgomery was fond of solitary walking; like Isaac, going "out to meditate in the field at the eventide;" and there is reason to believe that the beautiful scenery around Sheffield often suggested the outlines of those antediluvian pictures which the warmth of his imagination has heightened into something like paradisiacal beauty.

Of the general merit of the "World before the Flood," as an effort of genius, we can, perhaps, scarcely be expected to speak without undue partiality; but it seems that opinion is nearly divided between those who are disappointed not to find in it the invention of Milton, or the fervour of Byron, and those who think that a scriptural theme has been treated with the delicacy and spiritual sense of a Christian poet, and in exact conformity with the intention avowed in the preface.

As might be expected, the congratulations of the poet's personal friends were prompt and cordial, and must have been none the less welcome, that they

* "She at once plunged eagerly into the work, and, to the great credit of the poet, read the whole of it *at a sitting*."—*Life of Foster*, vol. ii., p. 521.

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often selected for specific commendation widely different passages.

"The alterations in the 'World before the Flood,' are," says Mr. Roscoe, "such as to render it, in fact, a new poem since I saw the MS. It has now a legitimate plan with a regular narrative, affording abundant opportunities of beautiful description of which you have very successfully availed yourself, whilst much of your former poem is introduced, and forms the strongest part of the work. On the whole, I have no doubt that in point of good taste, as well as with regard to the opinion of the public, you are right in the additions and improvements you have made, and yet I feel a sort of regret in the loss of that wild and irregular, but sublime and magnificent sketch, of which I was favoured with the perusal, of the 'World before the Flood;' this seemed to exhibit some immense fragments—all that could be recovered; but to these fragments you have now added such materials as have enabled you to complete a beautiful building, not less regular in its plan and perfect in its parts than most of those of the present day, and which I have no doubt will be as durable as any of them."

"I do not say," writes Dr. Aikin, "that the antediluvian world appears to the reader's imagination with all the clearness and congruity that a picture of the world of which we form a part would admit; but considering the novelty of the scenes, and the small aid you could derive from Scripture history, I think you have succeeded wonderfully in maintaining a general impression of reality."

Women are shrewd judges of heart utterances, whether in poetry or otherwise; and the "cardiphonia" of Montgomery's poem were too distinct not to tempt interpretation. Mrs. Hofland thus addressed the poet:—

"I can see where you have not been quite at your ease, but I can see also where you have been too much so: in many lines of Javan's love, and his wanderings, his talents, his tenderness, and his regrets, your thoughts were too full of James

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Montgomery: he sat for your hero, and the picture was drawn to the life. I could know the features from thousands. I fear this exquisite delineation cost you much; in retracing sorrows you felt them; in painting love you awoke it. Well; let it be your consolation that the world has been benefited by your passion; it rarely happens to be so by similar feelings."

His friend, Mrs. Montague, says:—

"We have the 'World before the Flood,'—but we have also the *World after the Flood;* and it is impossible, though I oppose my nine children, and Basil fences himself with bankruptcy papers, that we can always keep *it* out. You will be with us in the shades of Bolton [Abbey], and your own Elysium is not more beautiful; *there* we shall enjoy your work."

And there they did enjoy it: his correspondent was in raptures with the poem, and we like her confessions and her criticisms.

"I have read the 'World before the Flood' again and again. I do not know any character so sublime as Enoch; it has the grandeur and awful simplicity of Michael Angelo —I borrow my comparison from a sister art, for I know nothing like it in poetry. Why did you include in the volume any of your 'Prison Amusements' to bring us back to earth, and even cast us into prison?"*

* And yet—such is the difference of tastes—another, and equally intelligent, correspondent regretted that "Paul Positive's marriage was not among the [republished portion of] 'Prison Amusements;' I have so often read it with pleasure." Soon after the transcription of the extracts in the text, the writer of this note was accosted by a gentleman, *sotto voce*, with the startling inquiry, "Do you know that Mr. Montgomery was married?" "Certainly not," was the reply; "and why do you put such a question?" "Because," said the gentleman, "there is a letter in existence which, I am told, proves the fact; I will try to obtain it for you." That letter is before us: it begins thus:—"My dear friend,—In a gloomy humour, I wrote the preceding trifle a few

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The sentiments expressed in the foregoing passages from Mrs. Montague's lively letter, were those of the most intelligent readers of the work generally; and, to a great extent, contemporary critics adopted the same generous tone.

With reference to particular passages, there are many which for moral pathos, and curious pencilling, are not surpassed by any contemporary production.

"One of the most original and beautiful similes which occurs in modern poetry, was long afterwards reproduced by Lord Byron, in the third canto of 'Childe Harold.' The noble poet, describing his wanderings, says:—

"'——————— For I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock on ocean's foam to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.'

"In the 'World before the Flood' are the following enchanting lines, among a multitude of others of almost equal merit:—

"'All else that breathed below the circling sky
Were linked to earth by some endearing tie;
He only, like the ocean weed uptorn,
And loose among the world of waters borne,
Was cast companionless, from wave to wave,
On life's rough sea—and there was none to save.'

---

days ago. You will learn from it a secret, which I have hitherto withheld, even from you and all my friends in Sheffield, namely, that *I am married!*" Plain terms these, certainly; and, apart from the context, more than sufficient to justify the hint above alluded to: the writer adds—"If you approve of the piece, pray put it in the next 'Iris,' as it must appear during my absence, if it appear at all. *Scarbro'*, July 23. 1796." And in the next "Iris" did appear, with this date, "A Tale too True;" and the verses also described the poet's courtship and marriage. But alas for prosaic conjecture!—

"The *Muse* was Paul Positive's twenty-tongued wife;
Misfortune his mother-in-law!"

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"If the above thought was borrowed from Mr. Montgomery, as we think it must have been, he [Lord Byron] owes that gentleman much." *

The "death of Adam" has been universally admired: the "Eclectic" considered it as the poet's masterpiece, "as well as one of the noblest passages in the whole compass of modern poetry." Besides the generally favourable opinion of the reviewers, the sale of four thousand copies of such a work in England alone, during the first two years, is a strong testimony of popular admiration.

In this volume, besides the "other occasional pieces" to which we have adverted under the dates of their composition respectively, appeared four sonnets translated, or, to use the more modest term in the title of each, "imitated" from the Italian. The poet's strong desire to be able to read Tasso, Ariosto, and Dante, in the originals, had very early turned his attention to that beautiful language which embodies the inspirations of the Tuscan muse: and on the assurance of a gentleman from Glasgow, an early friend of Campbell's, who happened to pass some time at Sheffield, that the study would be at once pleasant, easy, and self-rewarding, Montgomery again resolutely set himself to a task, to persevere in which, he was, as we have said, afterwards stimulated by the example and rewarded by the good opinion of Mr. Roscoe. Although Montgomery never, perhaps, attained to what might deserve to be called scholarship in Italian, his large specimen of translations from the "Divina Commedia," afterwards published, as well as several sonnets, sufficiently attest his acquaintance with the poetical genius of the language.

Montgomery, as we have repeatedly intimated, was,

* British Review, vol. ix. p. 3.

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from the very commencement of his editorial career, the advocate of wise and liberal measures for the amelioration of the temporal or spiritual condition of his fellow men, and the columns of the "Iris" were always open to any correspondent having this object. Decidedly, however, as he had now for some years avowed and urged the supreme importance of "eternal things," even in his newspaper, it was not until the summer of 1813 that he ventured publicly to address a religious assembly, and thus take the first step in that career of evangelical usefulness in which he afterwards became so conspicuous.

"Yesterday," said he ("Iris," June 8.), "being the first anniversary of the Sunday-school Union, in Sheffield, was a day of rejoicing that will be remembered throughout the present generation, and recorded to the next, as one of the brightest and happiest in the lives of those who took part in its innocent and animating festivity. . . . In moving, seconding, and supporting the Resolutions, which passed unanimously, we had the privilege to hear, with unwearied delight, many powerful and pathetic addresses by ministers and others who were engaged in conducting the business of the day. These, though we have neither room nor opportunity of repeating either the substance or a shadow of them, were not delivered for the time and place only of that meeting. Those who heard them will carry away such portions of them as most tenderly or pleasingly touched their own hearts, and will eagerly communicate these to their friends and acquaintance," &c.

Among those who *did* hear was the writer of this paragraph, and *he*, at all events, can never forget the scenes and impressions of that day, especially his surprise and delight at seeing the poet stand up and address the assembly. He was afterwards prevailed upon to prepare an abstract of his address, and allow it to be printed with "The Report" of the "Union," which he

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also drew up. As Montgomery's first appeal to any audience from a platform, and as marking the commencement of a very important religious movement, we give the following extract from the speaker's own copy: —

"My Christian Brethren and Friends*,

"Although I am afraid, I am not ashamed, to declare in the presence of this great company a few of the sentiments that have deeply impressed my own mind on the subject of this day, and which may seasonably engage yours, if I can find utterance for them; — few they must be, for, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I have neither strength nor memory to detain you long. We are met on no ordinary occasion, and in no ordinary place. Christians of sundry denominations are come hither in the spirit of peace and good will; and having one amiable and excellent object in view, they forget all their differences, and joyfully combine to promote it. Thus indeed you are proving the sincerity of your professions by the evidence which Christ himself required, 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.'

"I said that we were assembled in no ordinary place. Although, under the Gospel dispensation, we are privileged to draw nigh to our Maker at all times, and wherever we are, yet do we feel him more immediately present in places consecrated to his worship, and in the midst of the great congregation. Of a truth 'this is the house of God,' and we are met together at the very 'gate of heaven!' 'God is in his temple; let the whole earth keep silence before him.' Let *us* for a while withdraw our minds from the cares and anxieties, as well as from the pleasures and vanities of this life, to consider how we may best employ these precious, these inestimable moments. It is good for us to be here; — even as it was good for the disciples to be on the mount, when their Master was transfigured before them, and ap-

* This was his general introductory phrase. We recollect he once added, "As we are accustomed to say at Fulneck."

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peared in his glory no longer mere man, but God manifest in the flesh. And how shall we better employ these delightful moments than in inquiring, and profiting by the result of the inquiry, — 'wherein consists the happiness of heaven?' The happiness of heaven consists in two things, — for these comprehend all that pertains to happiness, — the enjoyment of God, and the communion of saints. And wherein consists happiness on earth? The answer is the same, — in the enjoyment of God, and the communion of saints. No other enjoyment or communion, where these are excluded, can merit the name, or give more than the semblance of happiness. It becomes us then to nourish those social, endearing, exalting affections, that draw us together on occasions like these, and unite us in bonds of Christian friendship. If we love one another with pure hearts fervently, we shall love God supremely. If we fulfil the first commandment, we cannot fail in the second; if we love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength, then, and not till then, shall we love our neighbour as ourself. As on earth there are various ranks among men, and professions among Christians, so we have reason from Scripture to believe that there may be various orders among celestial intelligences, and degrees even among the spirits of just men made perfect. 'In my Father's house,' says our Saviour, 'there are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you.' And can we imagine that the inhabitants of those mansions do not frequently intermingle and associate for holy and glorious purposes! Among angels and saints there can be no envyings or strife, no jealousy or estrangement among beings so pure and exalted; there must be eternal harmony, fellowship, and 'charity, which is the bond of perfectness.' Love can only be measured by love; *here*, increasing in love to our God, we increase in love to our neighbour also; *there*, it is the same in an infinitely higher degree: and it will require eternity itself for one human soul to expand in all its affections. Next to the unspeakable enjoyment of serving God in his temple, day without night for ever, it is the blissful

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privilege of glorified spirits to hold communion among themselves; perhaps even to cherish peculiar attachments, and render to each other offices of kindness, for we cannot conceive of a state of existence in which happy associated beings are not linked by ties of mutual dependence, or have not perpetual opportunities of serving as well as loving one another. Be this as it may, in the worship of God there is but one soul, one voice, one song among the ransomed of the Lord on Mount Zion: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!' — and wherefore do these account him worthy: 'because he hath redeemed US from *every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*, and made us unto our God kings and priests.' Hence we perceive that 'the communion of saints,' even in 'the enjoyment of God,' consummates the full, yet for ever increasing, felicity of heaven. Let this communion, then, be diligently cultivated among Christians of every name and persuasion; let this felicity be begun in time, and it will be perfected through eternity."

The chairman of this meeting was George Bennet, Esq., a gentleman of refined manners, high Christian principle, and whose whole time and income were devoted to the service of humanity. Although brought up in, and attached to, an Independent church, there was no benevolent or evangelical movement, by whatever party originated, with which he did not co-operate; and in him Montgomery ever found a wise, active, unbigoted religious coadjutor, as well as an endeared friend: his name will often hereafter occur in these pages.

The following letter, tender and touching as if the writer had himself been a parent, was addressed to his brother and sister on the death of their second child — the girl about whose baptismal name the poet had speculated so pleasantly on a previous occasion: —

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James Montgomery to the Rev Ignatius and Mrs. Montgomery.

"Sheffield, August 11. 1813.

"MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,

"I believe that this letter will find you in that sweet and humble state of resignation to the divine will, which best becomes those who sorrow not as *they* do who are without hope; and since the bitterness of death is past, and the violence of grief subsiding into patient endurance, I may now come into your quiet dwelling in this accustomed form, and say 'Peace be unto you' — the peace which is at all times and under all circumstances the portion of the disciples of the Lord Jesus, who gave that peace and left it with his first followers, as an inalienable inheritance to all who should after them believe in his name. My dear sister's affecting letter, to which Ignatius lent a word or two at the conclusion, prepared me, by a recital of some of the sufferings of poor Henrietta in her illness, for the intelligence of her release from them, which I received this morning. I am glad that Agnes did not delay till another day to write, as in that case she would not have written at all. — O! how many good deeds are left undone for ever, because they are put off for an hour! — and because your joint epistle — I love to see you hand in hand even on paper — gave me very encouraging views into both your hearts, and assured me that they *were* right in the sight of God at the time you were expecting, and even dreading, the dispensation which has since arrived, but in which you equally acknowledge his wisdom and goodness towards you and your sweet infant. That infant, he who lent it you has reclaimed; and I doubt not that, to borrow a Scripture phrase — he has received his own *with usury*, at his coming, on this occasion. Remember that you occupied but till he came; he *is* come, and though your treasure is taken from you for awhile, it is only laid up in heaven in eternal security for you, and will be restored to you in the day of the Lord, when she whom you loved so dearly and mourn so bitterly will be one of the brightest jewels in your

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crown of righteousness. I say this under the perfect persuasion that you faithfully fulfilled your duty as parents to this little saint thus early translated, yet in good time — for it was the Lord's time, — to the kingdom of her heavenly Father. This providence you both feel has drawn you nearer to God; and the nearer you have been drawn to Him, have you not been the more strengthened and comforted, and submissive to His will, till at length you had no will of your own, and were enabled to rejoice amidst your affliction, in hope of the glory that shall hereafter be revealed, of which Henrietta is already a partaker, and to which you, though later than she, shall finally be advanced? Since we met in London in May last year, this dear child has been born into our family, has lived in it her full appointed time, and is entered into rest, even before she entered into conflict with sin. I had a sister once, but she was in heaven before I appeared on earth; with the lovely idea which I form of her, the idea of sweet Henrietta shall now be associated in my mind — not only in my imagination but in my affections; — for though I never saw either, they live and they will live for ever, where — O God grant it! — where I would be too, when I have put off all the sorrows of mortality. These two little ones are perhaps now companions in paradise: Henrietta — you know not how much she learned on earth — may already have met both her mother's and her father's parents at the footstool of the throne of the Redeemer — for that is their place even in heaven; and I can imagine how many welcome things she has told them concerning Agnes and Ignatius; — me she never knew: it is well, for so can she have nothing to say which a spirit in the body might imagine would grieve even a spirit in glory to hear. My dear brother and sister, how little have you to mourn for in the loss of a child so innocent, because so young! and how much cause to rejoice, under that loss, that she is rescued for ever from the evil which is in this world, and the world which is to come! At this moment, while I am writing in a distant part of the kingdom, you are preparing to commit the precious dust of

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that redeemed one to the grave. In spirit I am with you. When that dust shall rise again at the last day, O may we rejoice *together!* I must tear my hand away from this subject, or it will fill my letter; and I have a few things to say concerning myself. I have for several weeks past undergone sore trials and buffetings in my own soul. At times it has seemed as if the Lord had forsaken me; as if His 'mercy were clean gone for ever;' not because He was changed, but because I was so heartless and cold, and alienated from Him. I have indeed been much indisposed from similar weakness and disorder as troubled me twelve months ago; and I find that when the consolations of the Lord are most needful in illness and infirmity of body, they are hardest to seek; though the heart is alarmed, and the conscious clamorous, the spirit is weak, and the tempter has a tenfold power to dismay and cast down the sinner, who either has not known the Saviour, or having known Him, has lost his confidence in Him. I am a very forlorn being in many, many respects. Since I left the Brethren I have never dared to join myself with any other communion of Christians, and I want fellowship of this kind more than in any other way. With Calvinists and Methodists I frequently do associate, but I have not perfect freedom with either. Good men of both sects show me much love and kindness; and I cannot help feeling that in their charity they greatly overvalue me, and treat me in a way that makes me little indeed in my own eyes in proportion as I appear excellent in theirs. At the same time I lose many blessings, which can only be enjoyed in Christian communion; and my soul is starved for want of these. When we meet, we will talk more unreservedly on this subject than we have ever yet done, if I can find grace to open my lips upon it. . . . . Remember me very kindly to Henry [Steinhaur]. God, our Saviour, bless and comfort you; and may John James be all to you that both Henrietta and he were before! Farewell.

"Your brother,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. Ignatius Montgomery, Brethren's Chapel, Bristol."

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In the month of November he took an active part in a large meeting for the formation of a Methodist Missionary Society in Sheffield, on which occasion he made the following elegant allusion to one of the most beautiful phenomena in nature : —

"In the Bible Society," said Montgomery, "all names and distinctions of sects are blended till they are lost, like the prismatic colours in a ray of pure and perfect light: in the missionary work, though divided, they are not discordant; but like the same colours, displayed and harmonised in the rainbow, they form an arch of glory ascending on the one hand from earth to heaven, and on the other descending from heaven to earth — a bow of promise, a covenant of peace, a sign that the storm of wrath is passing away, and the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings, breaking forth on all nations."

It was on this occasion that he first saw and heard the Rev. Richard Watson, the vivid impression of whose person and eloquence never faded from his mind. Alluding to this subject twenty years afterwards, he said : —

"While my expectations of Mr. Watson, from speeches of his as reported in the newspapers, had been highly raised, they were not, I confess, entirely met; mainly because there was so much temperance in the tone, and so little ardour in the delivery of his sentiments: yet even then, they had made a deeper impression than I was aware of at the time. They recurred to me again and again in solitude. Mr. Watson, in fact, was one of those men who wear so well on acquaintance, that neither a first nor a second sight or hearing of him gave half the idea of his peculiar powers, which seemed to enlarge and improve with every fresh trial of their influence upon our understandings and affections."

At this period, as is well known, such of the clergy

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of the Established Church as felt it their duty to take an active part in the proceedings of evangelical societies, especially if this brought them into contact or co-operation with Dissenters, were exposed not merely to the sneers of profane wits, but to the scorn of many of their reverend brethren. Edward Smedley, the poetical son of a poetical father, and the ingenious author of "Prescience," chose, at a still later period, to indulge in such a strain in his "Religio Clerici," praising the parson over whose grave it might be said that —

> "—— sober, not austere,
> A Churchman, honest to his Church, lies here,
> Content to tread where wiser feet had trod,
> He loved established modes of serving God,
> Preached from a pulpit rather than a tub,
> And gave no guinea to a Bible club."

On reading this sneer of the poet against better men than himself, Montgomery said, in the bitterness of his regret, "I would rather be the stone which lies over the grave of a man who would fain inscribe it with such a sentiment, than the man himself!" When poor Smedley sank into an early grave — we trust with a more correct appreciation of *the Religion of the Clergy*, — Montgomery, the derided supporter of "a Bible Club," was among the first to contribute towards a monument which bore a better record than that above quoted.

He reviewed this year Mrs. Tighe's "singularly elegant poem" of "Psyche,"* and Scott's "Rokeby."† In the former, we find the substance of the author's opinions on *allegory*, which were afterwards incorporated

* Eclectic Review, vol. ix. p. 217. † Ibid. p. 587.

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into his lectures; and also some remarks on the *Spenserian stanza:* "Thomson, Beattie, Campbell, and Lord Byron," he says, "have exercised themselves in it with considerable elegance and vigour; Beattie and Lord Byron most equally; Thomson and Campbell most successfully in particular instances. Mrs. Tighe yields to none of her predecessors or contemporaries in general facility and felicity of handling this difficult measure." In the latter, he says, Scott "is the favourite poet of the day, because he is the most entertaining, and the most entertaining because he is the most intelligible,—not because either in fancy or feeling he exceeds or even equals some of his contemporaries. He speaks a kind of universal language. He pleases the learned and the ignorant; the man of taste and the trifler; and like the wandering minstrels, whom he so frequently celebrates, he is welcomed wherever he goes, and heard with equal attention in the cottage and in the palace."

We have no other review from Montgomery's pen at this period,—a circumstance no doubt attributable to the death of Parken, and some concurrent causes. The original projectors of the "Eclectic," and their allies, "entered into a compact of neutrality on disputed points of minor importance" in religious theories; thus, in the most effectual way, and by an honourable consistency, in waiving, so far as their pages were concerned, the topics of inferior controversy, they maintained, if not a "powerful," certainly a laudable "co-operation for advancing the fundamental interests of truth, piety, and charity." In an advertisement prefixed by the publisher to the volume commencing with June 1813, this neutral ground is formally abandoned; and the disappearance of Montgomery's contributions,

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and the commencement of the new editor's decidedly sectarian career, may be said to be simultaneous.

He visited Bristol in the autumn, when he had a pleasant interview with Cottle, the two friends meeting and parting not only as brother poets, but as fellow-Christians.

On the 5th of August 1811, the Rev. Thomas Spencer, a young Independent minister of very promising abilities, and recently settled at Liverpool, having been accidentally drowned while bathing in the tide, his successor in the pulpit, the Rev. Thomas Raffles, composed an elegant memoir of him, which was published in the following year. When, on preparing the work for a second edition, the author wrote to ask Montgomery for a poetical tribute, the instant ejaculatory response of the poet was, "I will not sing a mortal's praise;" but his heart melted while his lip refused; and this sentiment became the key-note of his sweet little elegy on the death of Spencer.*

James Montgomery to the Rev. Thomas Raffles.

"Sheffield, Oct. 28. 1813.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"Every line of your letter deserves, but the last line requires, an immediate answer; it would probably have been a long time before the former obtained their deserts, if the latter had not been so peremptory, that I dare not defer justice to its demand for a day, lest I should prevent the timely birth, or even cause the miscarriage, of your expected volume from the press. I cannot believe that your title-page will need any other name than the two that must necessarily appear on it, to recommend the book to the world; and to introduce mine would at least be a work of supererogation, and like *all such* works, whatever the Pope

* Works, p. 301.

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may say, *not* a good work either. In this case, there need be no other objection urged than that it would be ostentatious; for though I allow that we must sometimes submit to be thought vain rather than shrink from the performance of a duty which holds forth our gifts or our graces conspicuously to public view,—and it may be to public admiration,—we ought never to obtrude ourselves into such an invidious and perilous predicament when religion is concerned, unless the severest *propriety at least* sanctions the display. For example, I feel no condemnation in my own mind in allowing my name to be attached to the verses on poor Spencer's death, in that place where you introduce them; and there are reasons, which you can easily imagine, independent of any gratification to my self-complacency, why my signature may be of service there. Nor will there be any wrong in mentioning in the title-page—if you are so disposed—the verses, as part of the contents of the volume, without the author's name. I am afraid there is pride even in this feeling of mine, and that I am more afraid of being thought proud than of being so. However, I will, if you will permit me, shelter myself under the commandment to 'shun the very appearance of evil;' and if I am base enough to be pleased with myself overmuch, my folly will only be a thorn in my own heart, and not the cause of offence to others. I was intercepted at this place by such a cloud of soot falling down the chimney, as to drive the flames of the fire, near which I was writing, almost into the middle of the room by the sudden explosion. For a few moments I seemed involved in the blaze, and felt how little a human being is in his own hands at any time; it is true, that on recollection, I find that there was no real danger,—I say I find, but 'I find,' here only means '*I think*,'—for a minute before this transient alarm, if I had been asked, I should have *found*, that is, I should have *thought*, there was no probability of such a volley of soot being fired upon me without any warning. The fact is,—and the fact is itself a *perpetual warning*,—that we know very little of our present circumstances, and nothing at all

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of the future: I may not live to finish the writing of this letter, nor may you, if you receive it, and arrive at this place, live to finish the reading of it. 'Prepare to meet thy God!' To you, to me, to every one who knows what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of this living God, the voice of mercy cries at every step of life, since life itself is but the way to death, and death a delivery to judgment. These reflections, though strangely introduced to your attention, were no less unexpectedly forced on mine by the accident which has given so different a turn to the course of this letter from anything I meditated when I sat down. But such reflections are never unseasonable, and *here* they cannot be out of place, since the first idea in this alarming train, 'How little a human being is in his own hands at any time,' has seldom been more awfully and affectingly exemplified than in the sudden removal of him concerning whom I write to you. This brings me back to the verses, but with humbled feelings; for if I had an archangel's powers of song, with the ambition of Lucifer to command the applause of my fellow-creatures, my voice would not only be silenced, but in my soul I should, under such impressions as have just been made on my mind, own how worthless were my best performances on ordinary and innocent subjects; but how worse than worthless, how profane, were the exercise of my powers on solemn and sacred themes (such as the Providence that snatched Spencer away) for my own glory. Yet, such is the deceitfulness of the human heart, that in its holiest offerings (I speak from the experience of mine) it cannot forget itself and its own merits, nor help being pleased in the eyes of man to divide that glory with its Maker, which its language ascribes to him. This is the peculiarly besetting sin of poets as well as of preachers;—I said sin, though I should have said temptation; for it is impossible to avoid the temptation, but it *is* possible to avoid the sin by continually watching unto prayer against it. You tell me that 2000 souls are committed to your care. You know that you have great gifts, and if the world did not tell you so, your own mind, conscious

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of its energies, would inform you. You are aware that you need a greater proportion of grace to enable you to use those gifts to edification. May you have the full measure of the Spirit of Christ, to make your preaching effectual to the salvation of yourself and your people! God bless and keep you.

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. T. Raffles, Liverpool."

James Montgomery to the Rev. Thomas Raffles.

"Sheffield, Dec. 18. 1813.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have waited all the week in expectation of a leisure hour to write to you. I have not found one, and I cannot bear to delay longer to thank you for the books and letter which I lately received from you. I am only concerned that you have been too liberal in acknowledging my petty contribution of verses by the gift of so many copies of your valuable work. I will not quarrel with you on this account, but I will endeavour to repay you in the best manner I can, namely, by putting most of them immediately into the hands of such friends as will know how to appreciate the worth of the presents you have enabled me to make, and who will feel themselves *in the first place* deeply indebted to you for furnishing them with so delightful an entertainment; for though you have set out a funeral feast, there is much to strengthen and cheer your guests who have Christian hearts and Christian hopes within them. . . .

"I have sometimes been suspected of contributing articles to the 'Eclectic Review;' I mention this merely to disclaim any part in the critique which appeared in that work on the first edition of 'Spencer's Life;' and I will go farther, and say that I thought it very harsh and uncharitable, for it made an unjust impression on the minds of those readers who took it for granted that the cynical remarks in it on your labours were true. The editor of the 'Review' was in this neighbourhood at the time, and was exceedingly chagrined on finding that his deputy had admitted such an unwarranted attack;

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for he assured me that he had intended to review the book himself, which would have been more to the credit of the 'Review,' as well as more to your satisfaction. Now, this is just as bad as telling school tales; but since I became acquainted with you personally, I have been anxious for an opportunity of exonerating myself from any apprehension in your mind that I may have used you scurvily when we were strangers. . . . .

"Your sincere friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. T. Raffles, Liverpool."

We conclude this year with a document which, even had it been less interesting in a literary point of view, yet, as a production of Montgomery's pen on an occasion which was calculated to call forth his best energies, and addressed to the son and representative of his sovereign, would fitly have found a place in this work. We refer to a congratulatory ADDRESS TO THE PRINCE REGENT on the victory which had been obtained by the combined forces of the allied powers at the battle of Leipsic. Few persons at present think much about an engagement which once filled England with rejoicing, and Europe with astonishment; and which cost Buonaparte the flower of an army of two hundred thousand men! But, rarely as Englishmen may recal the events of an action the consequences of which are felt by them at this day, it cannot be uninteresting to the reader of these Memoirs of Montgomery, to know what part he took, and what sentiments he professed to entertain, amidst the frenzy of rejoicing which animated his fellow townsmen. Strenuously as he had deprecated at the beginning those measures which involved this country in the war with France, and sincerely lamenting, as he did, every drop of blood that was spilt, and every soul that

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was suddenly sent into eternity, during its progress, he nevertheless felt as a Briton whenever victory crowned the arms of his countrymen: still, even amidst the proud language in which he recorded the vanquishment of the enemies of England, his feelings as a man and a Christian were predominant. After recording and expatiating upon the battle of Leipsic, he says: —

"None but fallen angels, and men possessed by them, can for a moment contemplate a field of battle, when the struggle is over, with emotions of delight. Assuredly we cannot think of the regions round Leipsic deluged with human blood, and spread with human carcases, without horror and indignation; yet since, in the present deplorable state of society in Christendom, such a spectacle of sin and misery must needs be exhibited on that theatre, in the eye of heaven and earth, we do sincerely rejoice that the principal cause of the wickedness has suffered the principal weight of the punishment. And we rejoice the more heartily because in this country, even from the throne, the voice of mercy and of moderation has been heard amidst the shout of victory."

Again, in the following week, he concluded a most spirited recapitulation of the state of public affairs with similar feelings: —

"We cannot help thus frequently deploring these calamities, because our countrymen in general think too little of them, having never seen or felt them as they are seen and felt abroad: and we cannot help repeating, however it may tire the ears that think drums and trumpets the sweetest music, our wishes for peace. Could our voice be heard throughout Europe, and being heard could it be attended to, we would address all sovereigns in the language of Petrarch to the Princess of Italy, and go from city to city, and country to country, crying 'Peace, Peace, Peace!' Till a magnanimous offer has been made and rejected, it cannot be said that a secure and glorious peace is unattainable."

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A meeting of the inhabitants of Sheffield, as in most other towns, was held, December 1., to concert the best means of giving effect to the expression of public feeling excited by this momentous victory. Bonfires, illuminations, and public dinners, appeared the most obvious and popular means of demonstrating the public joy: Montgomery was of a different opinion; and he had the honour to propose and advocate the following resolution: —

"That in lieu of an illumination, a subscription should be entered into for invalid soldiers, and the families of soldiers now serving, belonging to the parish of Sheffield;"—

a resolution which was eventually adopted by the meeting.* The following Address to the Prince Regent, written by Montgomery, was then moved by the Rev. Thomas Sutton, vicar, and carried amidst loud applause: —

"We, his Majesty's loyal and affectionate subjects, the Master Cutler, wardens, searchers, and assistants of the Corporation of Cutlers in Hallamshire, the town regent and his assistants, the twelve capital burgesses, and commonalty of the town and parish of Sheffield, the magistrates, the clergy, gentry, merchants, freeholders, and inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Sheffield,

"Humbly present to your Royal Highness our most dutiful and cordial congratulations on the recent triumphs of his Majesty's arms in Spain, and even within the territory of France, under Field-Marshal the Marquis of Wellington; on the signal victories obtained over the common

* Of this seasonable and patriotic charity, above six thousand individuals, including children, were ultimately made the joyful partakers.

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enemy in Germany by his Majesty's allies; on the emancipation of Holland by the people themselves; and on the prospect of the early and entire deliverance of Europe.

"It is peculiarly grateful to us, that the FIRST opportunity we have had of thus addressing your Royal Highness on the relative situation of our country and the continent, is the most glorious opportunity* we ever enjoyed of addressing our sovereign or his representative on public affairs since the war began. The last time we approached the throne on such an occasion we congratulated your royal father, our most gracious sovereign, (whose continuing indisposition we sincerely deplore) on the laurels won by our brave countrymen, under Sir Arthur Wellesley, at the battles of Roleia and Vimiera. Since then we have marked with increasing admiration the progress of that great commander in the long, laborious, and complicated struggle which he has maintained against an enemy whose veteran armies were in vain superseded by others as he disgraced them. With equal satisfaction we have observed, that the honours of his sovereign have been worthily accumulated upon him as he added to the honour of his country in every stage of his unparalleled career, — from the lines of Torres Vedras, whence he looked forwards through the fields of peril which he meditated to traverse; to the heights of the Pyrenees, whence he looked back on the fields of glory which he had won.

"But he fought not the battles of Spain and Portugal alone, in the Peninsula; — the fate of Europe changed with the unexpected resistance to French usurpation *there*, — it

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* Hallam, in his elegant and interesting "History of the Middle Ages," mentions the victory of Leipsic as one "which may justly be reckoned among the few battles [Marathon, Arbela, the Metaurus, Chalons, and the victory obtained over the Saracens by Charles Martel, are mentioned] of which a contrary event would have essentially varied the drama of the world in all its subsequent scenes."—*History of the Middle Ages*, vol. i. p. 8., note.

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hung in suspense while the conflict remained doubtful, — and it has been decided in the same hour that the Champion of Britain completely delivered the country of our ally. Animated by the example of a war in which it was manifest that the armies of France so universally dreaded were not invincible, when opposed by men born free like Britons, or men fighting to become free like Spaniards, the sovereigns of the continent awoke to the knowledge of their true interests, and to the discovery of their true strength; they made one cause with their people and with each other, and that cause has prevailed. Thus has the spoiler of nations been baffled in the south, and in the north, and in the heart of Europe. In Spain, by British valour and Spanish constancy, he has been expelled from a kingdom which he had seized by perfidious policy. In Russia, by the self-sacrificing patriotism of the people, he lost an empire which he imagined he had conquered, and lost it in the moment when his victory seemed complete by the near possession of its ancient capital. — The flames of Moscow at once enlightened and warmed the North of Europe; — and in Germany, when the fugitive returned to renew the strife for continental ascendancy, he was driven from Dresden to the Rhine, from disaster to disaster, till he had lost in a few days the labours of as many past years, and the hopes of all his future life.

"The next victory on which we congratulate your Royal Highness is a bloodless one: — Holland became free, as the natural consequence of the exhaustion which her oppressor had suffered in Russia and Germany; and by the instantaneous revival of a spirit of liberty, which for a time had been overwhelmed but could never be quenched.

"We have dwelt long on these events, but it is because their number, as well as their magnitude, forbids compression. We have dwelt long upon them, but your Royal Highness will not think we have dwelt too long on subjects which will furnish lessons to the statesman, examples to the warrior, and themes to the poet and historian, so long as human genius can adorn, or human records perpetuate them;

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subjects which, in the present generation, ought never to be out of the eye or the mind of princes and their people, since on the profitable use of the experience which these have supplied, depend the immediate safety and the lasting independence of the States of Europe. To the profitable use of this experience, according to the magnanimous declaration of your Royal Highness at the late opening of Parliament, and the temperate yet noble and public-spirited sentiments expressed by your Ministers on the same occasion, we, with the rest of his Majesty's loving subjects, look for the attainment, in due season, of our dearest hope —an honourable, secure, and permanent peace. Meanwhile, may your Royal Highness be guided in your counsels and blest in your person by that Divine Providence which has preserved to such venerable old age the life of your royal father! for whom, and for your Royal Highness, as the ruler of a free, a faithful, and a happy people,

"We will ever pray, &c."

This "Address" was the theme of general admiration at the time it was written; although we know that Montgomery himself afterwards thought it too flowery; and the reference to peace, with which he concludes, as his "dearest hope," was not made without due consideration of the probable fallacy of the bearing of those great events which he had mentioned, and in allusion to which he says, a week or two afterwards: —"All these things are omens of peace, but omens are not pledges, they are apt

"'To make the promise to our hope,
And break it to our heart.'"

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CHAP. XLI.

1814.

POLITICAL RETROSPECT. — MORAVIAN MISSIONS. — A "THEME FOR A POET." — LETTER TO DR. RAFFLES. — MR. EVERETT'S FIRST SIGHT OF MONTGOMERY. — CONVERSATION. — LADY SPARROW AND BOWDLER. — ALLIES ENTER PARIS. — WAR AND PEACE. — DICKENSON'S TILT. — LETTER TO DR. RAFFLES. — SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION. — MISSIONARY ANNIVERSARIES. — WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES. — REVIEW OF SOUTHEY'S "LIFE OF NELSON." — MEADLEY'S "MEMOIRS OF SYDNEY." — LETTER FROM REV. C. F. RAMFTLER. — MONTGOMERY'S ADMISSION TO THE MORAVIAN CHURCH. — LETTER TO HIS BROTHER IGNATIUS. — VISIT TO SCARBOROUGH. — LETTER TO MISS GALES. — "MARGARET." —"A MOTHER'S LOVE."

"LOOKING," says the editor of the "Iris," in his retrospect of affairs, "from the privileged shores of Britain, over Europe, we observe the two countries, from which all the rest derived arts and refinement, sunk in the lowest state of political degradation. The descendants of the ancient Greeks resemble their progenitors as much as the thistles of modern Lebanon resemble the forests of cedar that once flourished there, —to which they claim no better affinity than that of growing, in a later age, on the same soil. . . . Italy, the younger sister of Greece, and the mother of the most warlike people that ever existed,—now, in all the dotage and decrepitude of senility,—presents a ludicrous and yet pitiable spectacle of fallen grandeur, emaciated beauty, and drivelling intellect. The Italians, at best,

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are only plaster casts of the old Romans, preserving the forms of grace and excellence in frail and worthless materials." . . . How lamentably and emphatically true was the following paragraph! — indeed, *when*, up to the year 1814, would the remark of Virgil have been inapplicable?—

> "Armorum sonitum toto Germania cœlo
> Audiit."

"Germany," says Montgomery, is "emphatically called the Heart of Europe, into which the veins of surrounding nations periodically send their blood, not, as in the animal body, to be renewed, and returned more vigorously through the system; but to be poured out like water through wounds in that heart, which are never suffered to heal before fresh ones are opened by the swords of contending potentates." *

The following is one of those fanciful but graphic sketches which he sometimes hit off so happily. After having alluded to the appointment of Maria Louisa to the Regency, when Buonaparte was about to put himself at the head of the "grand army," and to the solicitude apparently evinced by the emperor for the safety of his wife and child, Montgomery proceeds:—

"When a child is born, nobody can tell what it may live to be. When Buonaparte was in his mother's arms, it was less within the compass of conjecture that he would one day be Emperor of France, than that this poor babe, which has been born, almost out of the course of nature, heir of an empire greater than Charlemagne's, should be a strolling player in youth, and a ballad-singer in age, should live in wretchedness, and die in obscurity. It would furnish a curious and fruitful subject for a romance, to write the

* Iris, Jan. 11. 1814.

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imaginary *future life* of this child of expectation, from the present time to the year 1877, in which it may be as well presumed that he will die as in any other; and we will venture to say, whatever strange adventures the fancy of the writer might assign to him, provided they were in the sphere of possibility, they would be quite as probable, looking forward *now*, as those changes of fortune which really do await him, but which no human sagacity can foresee." *

Poor child! a very few weeks entirely altered the aspect of his destiny; and still fewer years terminated, with his life, all the romance of history which was ever to belong to him, beyond the "accident of birth."

It is pleasant to turn from political comments to appeals in behalf of religion, or the inspirations of poetry; and this Montgomery himself was always glad to do as often as he could, even in his newspaper. In the month of January, he laid before his readers the case of the Moravian Missions, including an affecting account of the ruin of one of their settlements at the burning of Moscow; and, at the same time, gave an account of the success of the labours of the Brethren among the Greenlanders, who were said to be "behind no nation whatever in the practice and enjoyment of pure religion." We advert the more distinctly to the appearance of this article, because simultaneously therewith Montgomery seems to have conceived the first idea of that beautiful poem on the subject, which was not published till long afterwards. He has, indeed, very distinctly marked this date and fact, by placing the figures, "1814," conspicuously at the head of a series of stanzas, entitled a "Theme for a Poet," and accompanied by a note.† After adverting, in graceful

* Iris, Feb. 8. † Works, p. 316.

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terms, to the names and principal works of Southey, Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, and Campbell, the poet adds :—

"Transcendent masters of the Lyre!
Not to your honours I aspire;
Humbler yet higher views
Have touch'd my spirit into flame:
The pomp of fiction I disclaim;
Fair Truth! be thou my muse:
Reveal in splendour deeds obscure,
Abase the proud, exalt the poor.

"I sing the men who left their home,
Amidst barbarian hordes to roam;
Who land and ocean cross'd, —
Led by a loadstar marked on high
By Faith's unseen, all-seeing eye,—
To seek and save the lost;
Where'er the curse on Adam spread,
To call his offspring from the dead." &c.

The poem of "Greenland," however, ultimately appeared not only unaccompanied by so appropriate an invocation of that "Theme for a Poet," as these stanzas display; but with the omission of eight lines, originally forming the opening of the poem, but subsequently printed (in 1820) as a motto on the title-page of a new edition of Crantz's "History of Greenland:" a work, the revision of which has often, but mistakenly, been attributed to Montgomery.

James Montgomery to the Rev. Thomas Raffles.

"Sheffield, Feb. 16. 1814.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Yes.—I have now answered your last letter, and I could have done just as much, and no more, by return of

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post, if my conscience would have let me give you so little trouble at one time. Now, I almost wish I had; for though I have an hour before me, I am so unwell, and so wearied with a recent effort of mind, that has left me empty of thought, that I dread the idea of employing even a quarter of an hour in scrawling over this sheet. Consequently, if this letter be not very dull, it will not resemble me, or represent my present feelings, of which I may say with Cowper,—

"'If ought is felt, 'tis only pain
To find I cannot feel.'

"I will turn to your letter, and say a few words in reply to its several topics, as I find them. Mr. Burder is very welcome to copy the verses on Spencer into the 'Evangelical Magazine,' if he thinks them worthy of further attention. I think, for the service of your volume, it ought to be stated from *whence* they are taken. Mr. Burder lately applied to me for some rhyming contributions, through the medium of the Rev. James Boden, of this town. I sent him one small piece, but I know not whether he has accepted it. This reminds me of my sin of procrastination with respect to the respectable editor of the 'Christian Philosopher.' I have not yet written to him, of which I am heartily ashamed; but I have never ceased to *intend* to do it, or to wish that I *had* written long ago. I *will* write, however, if I live, and do well; the latter condition I must lay some stress upon, as *I may live*, for that *does not* depend upon myself; but I may *not do well*, for that *does* depend upon my own exertions, and they are never to be depended upon. The worst is, that I have nothing to send to the work, and my brains are already so deeply pledged for labour unperformed, that I can promise nothing. I am glad to find that your second edition of the 'Life of Spencer' has been so well received by the public. I *have* read it over with more attention, and certainly with far more interest than I read the former—for *your* sake. It makes a great difference sometimes in reading a book, to know the author, especially

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if we have only negligently read it before, when he was a stranger. I much approve of the division, which relieves the mind as well as the eye; an uninterrupted narrative is like a stream, that makes one giddy to look at its perpetual motion. . . . If you reprint the verses, pray do not forget to correct the quotation. . . . I hate the abbreviation of *even* to *e'en:* I am, indeed, an enemy to almost all abbreviations in poetry. English metre does not depend upon the *number* of syllables, but the time of pronouncing them; the length of a line must be measured by the ear and not by the finger ends . . . .

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. Thomas Raffles, Liverpool."

The spring of the present year is associated in the mind of one of the biographers with very pleasing recollections, as having been the period when he first obtained — what the works of Montgomery had long led him ardently to wish for — a sight of their author. Being on a visit at Sheffield, Mr. Everett at once inquired for the residence of the poet. This was readily pointed out, but with the gratuitous and unwelcome intimation that his chance of seeing the object of his curiosity, unless he had some introduction to or business with him, must depend entirely on accident. To purchase a book was an obvious and easy means of introducing himself to the Misses Gales, with the sheer *possibility* of incidental gratification. On entering the shop in the Hartshead, the visitor's hope was cheered by overhearing a person asking to see the bard, who presently made his appearance. For a few minutes Mr. Everett gazed upon him with inexpressible delight, while purchasing a volume of his poems; having, as he remarked to a friend, "given five shillings to see Montgomery, and considered himself amply repaid." When

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this circumstance was afterwards mentioned to the poet, he pleasantly replied, "You got *something* for your money, and succeeded better than Dr. Raffles, who, with a similar object, went round and round the house before he ventured in."*

Frequent attempts to obtain a sight of Montgomery's person by strangers were made about this time under circumstances, and with results, similar to the foregoing —at least so far as the purchasing of a book, if not the actual gratification of the visitor's curiosity, was concerned.

The pleasantest of companions to an intelligent visitor of piety or sentiment, the poet was one of the worst local cicerones to whom a stranger could be recommended in terms similar to those used, in one instance, by his friend Archdeacon Wrangham, in a note presented by the Rev. George Caldwell.

"I greatly regret that he is merely *passing through* Sheffield, and that *tantum vidisse Virgilium* must be, in particular, his destiny—at this time, at least. You will, I am sure, recommend to his attention whatever he can most profitably see in the course of a short evening in that place: but you will perceive I have myself taken care, as far as lies in my power, that its principal glory shall not escape him unobserved."

It was in the summer of the present year that Lord Calthorpe, Lady Olivia Sparrow, and John Bowdler, one of the "Early Blossoms" preserved by Dr. Styles in

* It is stated in Lockhart's "Life of Scott," that Allan Cunningham, in his early days, and while earning his bread as a stonecutter in Nithsdale, made a pilgrimage on foot to Edinburgh, solely for the purpose of seeing the author of "Marmion" as he passed along the street.

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his volume afterwards published under that title, halted at Sheffield on their way from the Lakes, for the purpose of seeing Montgomery. They had visited Mr. Southey, at Keswick, and he had given them a letter of introduction to the author of the "World before the Flood." Montgomery was introduced to the party at the Tontine Inn. "I talked," said he, "incessantly for about three hours, not from vanity, but from sheer diffidence. I was astonished at myself afterwards, and afraid lest I might in any way have committed myself in the good opinion of Mr. Wilberforce or his friends: I mentioned the matter when I wrote to him; but his letter relieved me from further anxiety. *Holland:* "Had you any previous acquaintance with Bowdler?" *Montgomery:* "None, personally; I never saw him but on that occasion." *Everett:* "Was he ill at the time, or his life in apparent danger?" *Montgomery:* "Not that I was aware of; indeed, Lord Calthorpe, who is still living, and is a most amiable, active, and useful character, appeared to me the most delicate individual of the party. One of Lady Sparrow's kind expressions amused me. 'The reason, Mr. Montgomery, why we have called to see you is, that we may henceforth be good neighbours together; and I shall be very happy indeed to see you at Brampton Hall.' The idea of 'good neighbourhood' between a gentleman residing at Sheffield, and a lady in Huntingdonshire, struck me as curious." Poor Bowdler wrote her ladyship's address on a slip of paper now before us, a memento of that amiable young man, so soon afterwards hurried to the grave.

In the month of April the editor of the "Iris," in common with his countrymen in general, was called upon to rejoice—somewhat prematurely, as after-events

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unhappily proved—in the prospect of an immediate and final termination of that war which had so long deluged some of the fairest fields of Europe with human blood. After a series of signal reverses sustained by the French troops, and an ineffectual attempt to negotiate a peace with the emperor, the allied armies victoriously entered Paris in the latter days of March. Louis XVIII. was proclaimed King of France, while Buonaparte formally abdicated the throne, and consented to retire to the isle of Elba on a pension.

"These," wrote Montgomery at the time*, "are the facts of three weeks. Three ages, in the ordinary course of things, do not produce events so strange in their nature, so unexpected in their progress, so complicated in their relations, and so comprehensive in their consequences. It is easier to feel than to think on such occasions. As we find leisure and recollection, we shall expatiate from time to time on these subjects; at present we can only say what everybody says—and who can say more?—It is wonderful! It is not the work of man!"

Pursuing the subject the following week—

"This war," said he, "unlike every other, has been terminated, not by pacification but by extinction: it has gone out like a torch in mephitic air; it has exploded like the fire-damp in a mine; it has vanished like one of those infernal spirits which, in vulgar legends, are said to walk the earth awhile, doing their master's errands, and then abruptly disappearing in sulphur and smoke. On the renewal of hostilities in 1803, Mr. Addington, when goaded to assign reasons for the rupture, exclaimed, 'We are at war, because we cannot remain at peace.' A happy emphasis gave this foolish saying the character of wisdom: *now* it may be said,

* Iris, April 12. 1814.

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altogether as wisely, and a million times more happily, 'We are at peace, because we cannot be at war any longer.' Metaphysical in its pretext, insane in its principle, for ever changing its object, crying 'Havoc!' for the sake of havoc, the contest has been carried on as if there was a fatality laid on the belligerents, by which they were irresistibly impelled to kill or be killed, till some miraculous interference of Providence should suspend their rage. Miraculously, indeed, has their rage been suspended by the interference of Providence; and though suspended instantaneously, we confidently hope it will never be renewed, for the war has fully verified its name,—it *has* been *a war to extermination*; one party, the party hitherto ascendant, *is* exterminated. There is no enemy left in the field, and peace is the inevitable consequence of no further employment for arms—the best security for tranquillity that can be given."*

Alas, for editorial vaticinations! Providence, whose mysterious workings appeared to be so fairly interpreted in the foregoing remarks, had unrevealed and immediate designs of a still more wonderful character in store.

About this date, Mr. Joseph Dickenson, of Sheffield, an industrious working man, applied to Montgomery, through his solicitor, for the loan of 800*l.*, to enable him to build a tilt and forge on a small plot of land called Dyson Holmes, near the river Don, at the foot of Wharncliffe Wood. The security seemed good, and the money was readily advanced; the solicitor remarking, that his client was not only an honest and industrious man, but one whom, he was sure, Montgomery would personally like when he saw him. His character, when inquired into, and his appearance when introduced to the poet, fully justified all that had been said of him; but behind one of the most open countenances ever seen, there lay, as the issue sadly proved,

* Iris, April 19. 1814.

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a mind of such uncalculating and credulous simplicity, that for many years—indeed, to the end of the life of both parties—Montgomery was more or less painfully harassed by this unfortunate transaction. Some idea of the nature of the case may be formed from the fact, that in order, as the mortgagee thought, to lessen the chance of immediately losing his own money, as well as to pay off other creditors less considerate than himself, and at the same time save, if possible, an industrious man from ruin, Montgomery advanced several other sums, the whole of which, including interest carried to the capital account, amounted, at the death of Dickenson, in 1832, to 2329*l.* At the last-mentioned period, by further sacrifice, and contrary to all advice, legal and friendly, Montgomery made arrangements with Dickenson's executors for the payment of all debts due from him, at the time of his decease, to other persons, amounting to upwards of 300*l.*, leaving the property in their hands, under such circumstances as promised to turn out beneficially to the family. We have adverted to this affair, not only because it is in some degree illustrative of the character of the good man whose life we are writing, but to meet the possible revival of a false and ungenerous allegation, that the only sufferer had acted selfishly and unkindly! We are perfectly acquainted with the details of the case, and are bound most conscientiously to avow our conviction that, from the time when Montgomery fully understood the difficulties in which Dickenson had involved himself, he not only deliberately determined, but expressed his determination, that whatever might be the inconvenience and loss upon interest to himself, as he alone had any security, he would never avail himself of that advantage, so long as any original creditor had a demand, and did not urge payment by oppressive

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lawsuits; and even in this respect he relaxed three on such occasions, and gave up nearly two hundred pounds which ought to have been carried to the liquidation of his claims.

James Montgomery to the Rev. Thomas Raffles.

Sheffield, May 4. 1814.

"My Dear Friend,

"I have not been able to collect the unsold copies of 'Spencer's Life' before this day. . . . . I congratulate you on the increasing success of the work. I will not apologise to you for the strange manner in which my name was introduced in the 'Eclectic' review of the second edition *: that article contained the very sentiments respecting your book which I had expressed in a private letter to the editor (I mean the publisher, who, I believe, is at present the editor); and I am not ashamed of them, though the addition respecting myself made me truly ashamed of the article. . . . The 'Eclectic' has lately changed hands; I believe the publisher [Mr. Conder] is a principal proprietor, and for his sake, as well as for the religious public's, I earnestly wish it better success than it has heretofore experienced,—and better to deserve it too; for though many admirable articles appear from time to time in it, the management was very slovenly for some time before the last change. I think it has improved, is improving, and may be still improved. . . . I am glad that you are to visit Sheffield at the Missionary meeting: I hope we shall have an hour or two of quiet conversation by ourselves amidst the happy tumult of that season.

"Your sincere friend,

"J. Montgomery.

"Rev. Thomas Raffles, Liverpool."

On the afternoon of Whit-Monday, May 30th, Montgomery attended the second annual Meeting of

* Eclectic Review, March 1814, p. 312.

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the Sheffield Sunday School Union. In an address of considerable length, and which was listened to with deep attention, he said,—

"The Lord has created 'a new thing in the earth;' the disciples of Christ not only love as brethren, but those who from some difference of opinion acted separately before, now unite in one purpose to promote their Master's cause among men. There is danger in running with the multitude to do evil, when amidst the contagion of example, and the tumult of publicity, the sinner seems to lose his personal responsibility in the crowd, and the guilt, divided among thousands, appears to attach to none, though, in truth, it attaches to each, as if each acted alone. There is danger also in running with the multitude to do good: danger in trying to escape from *ourselves* among the people of God. We may have a name among Christians; we may be affected by the external solemnity of divine worship; we may delight in the joy and animation of meetings like this, and yet be devoid of the spirit and power of godliness."

How much of solemn truth and seasonable warning does this passage contain!

On the 22nd and 23rd of June the first anniversary of the West Riding Branch of the London Missionary Society was held at Sheffield. On this occasion the Rev. John Campbell, who had just returned from a two years' visit to South Africa, was present, and gave an interesting account of his travels. Montgomery followed, and spoke with great energy and effect, especially when he adverted to the missionary labours of the Moravian Church, the good wishes of one of whose ministers he was charged to express. It was his first public missionary speech, and drew forth a strain of exuberant complimentary eloquence from the Rev. R. W. Hamilton, at this time quite a young man, and giving

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the earliest evidence of those extraordinary talents which he afterwards exercised so influentially and honourably as a Christian minister in the town of Leeds. It was arranged that, at the close of this meeting, the ministers and others assembled should partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as administered among the Independents. Montgomery was invited to communicate by his friend, Mr. Bennet. With equal feeling and simplicity he replied, "I am afraid I am not a Christian; I therefore dare not approach the table of the Lord." *Bennet:* "My dear sir, allow, in this case, your Christian friends to be the judges, as they may be better able to decide dispassionately than yourself, at the present moment." *Montgomery:* "Were I to communicate just now, I am afraid I should be found eating and drinking unworthily; and, consequently, sealing my own condemnation." *Bennet* (with the earnest and affectionate importunity of a religious friend): "The risk of that be upon *me.* I am willing to take the consequences of the act in that respect." Montgomery at length complied, approaching the Lord's table with fear and trembling, but also with a humble and contrite spirit, which his friends felt assured God would not despise. This little incident will probably affect very differently certain classes of readers; some, no doubt, will place the poet's hesitation to the account of an affected humility, while others, not doubting his sincerity, but being themselves less scrupulous on the point in question, may conclude that it proceeded from a false estimate of the state of mind required for a fit participation of that holy ordinance: we need only say that Montgomery had as little feigned and as much real humility as any man we ever knew; nor was he less correct in his views of Christian doctrine and personal experience; but he had also a just and

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deep conviction of the general depravity of human nature, and of the deceitfulness of his own heart; hence, they who have attained the largest measures of personal holiness will be the best judges of his conduct in this particular. "Receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper," said he, in a very solemn and impressive manner, to one of the biographers, long after this date, "is, with me, a very serious thing." And when he mentioned the occurrence of the preceding solemnity in the "Iris," he added,—"It was a season of humble and holy joy, such as will be remembered even in heaven with gratitude." Few editors of newspapers are expected to make such remarks as this; and still fewer, were they to do so, would be supposed to be testifying their own religious experience.

He attended, and spoke with considerable effect at the first anniversary meeting held in Sheffield in connection with the Wesleyan Missionary Society*, an occurrence to which he often referred in after years.

In the deplorable, but happily brief outburst of hostilities between the governments of Great Britain and the United States, of which, this year, Washington city was the scene, Montgomery felt more than a general concern. The printing-office of the "National Intelligencer," in that capital, fell a prey to the fire raised by an infuriated soldiery: and Mr. Gales, the proprietor of the paper, was, by at least one public journalist in England, confounded with the former proprietor of the "Iris," and spoken of, as such, in terms the reverse of sympathising. This malignant blunder provoked a spirited explanation and remonstrance from Montgomery, who ever spoke in the highest terms of the worth of his old Sheffield master and predecessor,

* See Report of Speech in Meth. Mag., 1814, p. 156.

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the latter being, at the moment of the destruction of his son's establishment at Washington, at his own residence at Rawleigh.

As a passing opinion, the prevalency of which time has perhaps rather increased than diminished, we copy the following paragraph from one of Montgomery's "leaders" on the American war.

"We declare that we do not wish the conquest of America. Our colonies are already out of due proportion to the parent country, and require an immense annual sacrifice of men and money; so that we should not regret if the most unwieldy were partitioned among the king's younger sons, or such heroes as Wellington. With British-born kings and their descendants reigning over them, with similarity of manners and language, we might look for more advantage from them than they now afford, even though occasionally they might be in open war against us. And surely they would be happier under their own kings of British sentiments than under the best governors and viceroys we ever sent them.* Hanover, we are glad to hear, will be separated quietly from us, whenever a queen shall sway the British sceptre, and it will be possessed by the direct male descendant of our royal family."†

The writer of this pleasant speculation, upon the material feature of which such conflicting opinions are

* A clever writer, the author of "Hochelaga," recorded a somewhat similiar sentiment thirty years afterwards. Speaking of the relations subsisting between Canada and England, he says—"May the day of severance be far distant! But perhaps in the long future, when grown to sturdy and independent manhood, it may become expedient that there should be a separate household for the old and the young, and that with a hearty blessing and a friendly farewell they should part: let them then part — but in love."—Vol i. p. 229.

† Iris, Sept. 13. 1814.

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entertained, lived to see "a queen sway the British sceptre," not, indeed, in the person of the illustrious princess who was then heir-apparent, but our present most gracious sovereign, who was not born at that time: he lived to see the direct male descendant of "our royal family" crowned king of Hanover; and also to see the Canadas, not indeed parting from the mother country with a filial sovereign and a "friendly farewell," but "in open war against us," and in favour of a republican government.

He was induced by his friend Mr. Conder to write two articles for the "Eclectic" this year. The first, a review of Southey's "Life of Nelson," appeared in the June number, pp. 606—621. It accords willing, eloquent, and well-considered assent to the claims of the hero and the victim of Trafalgar to the title of "the greatest British admiral." There is a brief passage near the close of the article, in which the reviewer gives place to the Christian in the utterance of a sentiment of very solemn import. After citing the detailed account given by the biographer of the last moments of Nelson on board the Victory, he says, "On this affecting scene, which awakens feelings more connected with eternity than with time, we shall make no comments; but we cannot forego the painful obligation of saying, that there is something in it to regret besides the national loss of so great a man."

The other article is a review of Meadley's "Memoirs of Algernon Sydney," in the September number (pp. 256—267); and here we have a memorable name, the charm of which the critic thinks will be rather lessened than increased by the labours of the biographer.

"Great, indeed, it is admitted, must have been the weight of Sydney's character, and the influence of his example,

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since poor, uncountenanced by his family, in banishment abroad, and in retirement at home, he was even an object of great fear and hatred to a weak and tyrannical court, and his ruin seemed so necessary to its safety as to be worth accomplishing by means the most foul, the most cowardly, and cruel. To this splendid departure, after a clouded career, he owes the pre-eminence of being one in the triumvirate of patriots, whose merits are united in the popular sentiment of '*The cause for which Hampden bled in the field, and Russel and Sydney on the scaffold.*' Yet still, '*stat magni nominis umbra ;*' — and admirable always, and exemplary often, as the conduct of Sydney appears at this calm distance from the scene which he adorned, we suspect that his character is more exalted by indistinct association in the minds of most people, than it will in reality seem to merit when it is better known."

And afterwards —

"The character of Sydney must be admired at a distance, and his example must be held up as worthy of imitation only under circumstances in which to imitate it would be deemed high treason; but high treason would then be a virtue — a virtue of necessity — as it was at the glorious revolution of 1688."

We have seen, in a letter addressed by the poet to his brother Ignatius, in the course of the preceding year, that he lamented the want of spiritual fellowship with some Christian community, his heart evidently yearning after a renewal of that intercourse with the Moravians, to which the remembrance of the past, and the hopes of the future, alike so fondly pointed. With the Brethren's congregation at Fulneck he determined formally to connect himself; accordingly, on the 4th of November — his forty-third birthday — he addressed a letter, through Mr. Ramftler the resident

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minister, to the congregational council, then and there assembled, and to which he received the following reply:—

The Rev. C. F. Ramftler to James Montgomery.

"Fulneck, Nov. 10. 1814.

"My dear Friend and Brother,

"Though you are not yet outwardly restored to the Brotherhood, in as far as this appellation belongs to members of our church, your letter of the 4th inst. encourages me, with more sincerity than ever before, to call you brother. You give therein such a satisfactory account of yourself, and in such a humble spirit solicit readmission to the privileges of the Brethren's congregation, that I can assure you, most readily and most cordially, *we* hold out the hand of fellowship to you. Your letter has been read not only by me, but heard by the members of our Conference, with real edification, and your request is under consideration, and shall certainly not be forgotten. Should the Head of the Church, and Ruler in a peculiar manner of the unity of the Brethren, see fit to suffer you to wait for some time, I trust, my dear friend, that you would not regard such waiting in any degree as being forgotten or disregarded by him, but rather satisfy your mind by the consideration that he has often to wait long for us; that he commands us to possess our souls in patience; and that his *time* as well as his ways often differ from ours, and nevertheless is the *best* time. Next Sunday we shall anew dedicate ourselves to Jesus as the Shepherd and Ruler of his people, and you will no doubt join us in spirit, while we humbly adore him, and pray for that disposition which, on all occasions, may *sincerely* lead us to say, 'Lord, not as I will, but as thou wilt.' Whenever your request for readmission to the congregation is granted by him, I shall take care to inform you of it. On that occasion it will not be absolutely necessary that you be personally present here, as it may be mentioned to the congregation, who will very cheerfully receive you, even in

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your absence. After that, your readmission to the Holy Communion with us will be the next step: when that is granted, you will at all events take the earliest opportunity of joining us at the table of the Lord. What we shall regret most is the distance at which you live from us, and the consequent impossibility of your frequently joining us in person in the house of the Lord. But I hope to be the more frequently favoured with written testimonies of your remembrance of us. In Sheffield we would wish you to attend where you find the most nutritious food for your soul.

"Your sincere friend and brother,

"C. F. RAMFTLER.

"Mr. James Montgomery, Hartshead, Sheffield."

It is very much to be regretted that the letter addressed by Montgomery to the Brethren at Fulneck on this interesting occasion is not to be found, having probably been destroyed along with other papers belonging to Mr. Ramftler after the death of this worthy minister, whose epistolary intercourse with the poet was marked by manly sentiment and solid piety, no less than by faithful and affectionate religious counsel.

The Rev. C. F. Ramftler to James Montgomery.

"Fulneck, Dec. 6. 1814.

"DEAR BROTHER MONTGOMERY.

"Doubtless you have received my letter of the 10th ult. Since then I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you. But I will not delay informing you, that in our Elders' Conference to-day, our Saviour approved of your being now readmitted a member of the Brethren's church. I cordially rejoice in this, and present my best wishes, united with those of my fellow-labourers, to you on this occasion. Return then, my dear brother, with your whole heart, to the Shepherd and Bishop of your soul, inasmuch as he has manifested

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himself peculiarly as the Head and Ruler of the Brethren's unity — return to that fold in which your dear late father lived and died, which counts a brother of yours among its useful ministers, and in the midst of which you enjoyed, in the period of early youth, spiritual blessings such as you probably have not forgotten. Our faith you know; the Bible we acknowledge as our only rule of doctrine and Christian practice; and our constitutional regulations, which form a brotherly agreement among ourselves, you are not unacquainted with. More particularly we may perhaps treat of these things, when we shall see you here. Renew your vows of love to our crucified, now glorified Redeemer; and may he preserve you blameless in the bundle of life until the day of his coming!

"The day on which your readmission would be regularly published to the congregation, and on which your personal presence would be very desirable, is Sunday the 18th inst. Perhaps you might prefer to spend Christmas with us; at that time, however, I fear there would be less suitable opportunity for such a congregational transaction; though you might be here the 18th, and, if your avocations allow it, continue here over Christmas; or else come at Christmas, and continue over New-year's day. Still, I should add that your personal presence on this occasion is not *absolutely necessary;* we *might* even in your absence receive you among us, and commend you to the benediction of our universal Head and Saviour. You are aware that a separate question about your readmission to the Holy Communion with *us* must be asked, which, after your readmission to the congregation is published, may be put as soon as it is thought suitable. Meanwhile we shall consider you henceforward as a member of the country congregation attached to Fulneck; and only wish that Providence may still so direct your ways as to enable you to spend part of your days again in the bosom of our church. Meanwhile you will visit us as frequently as your circumstances allow.

"Now may the Lord bless you, and keep you! May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and be gracious to

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you! May the Lord cause his face to shine upon you, and give you peace! Amen.

"How sincerely we send our united salutation to all our dear friends in Sheffield, though not named, I need not tell you. An early answer will greatly oblige

"Your sincere friend and affectionate brother,

"C. F. RAMFTLER."

We have been kindly favoured by the Rev. Mr. Libbey, of Fulneck, with the following transcripts from the church book at that place: —

"*Dec.* 10. 1814. A letter was received from Mr. James Montgomery of Sheffield, expressive of his gratitude that permission had been given for his readmission amongst the Brethren's people, and saying that he would endeavour to be here next Saturday, for the purpose of being present personally on the Sunday."

"*Dec.* 17. Another letter was received from James Montgomery, wherein he mentions, with regret, that the unfavourableness of the weather, and his weak state of health, made it impossible for him to venture on coming hither as he intended."

And then his name is mentioned with those of some other persons who were admitted to membership on the preceding Sunday.

His own feelings, on a review of the solemn transaction here alluded to, are expressed in the following letter: —

James Montgomery to the Rev. Ignatius and Mrs. Montgomery.

"Sheffield, Dec. 21. 1814.

"MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,

"I dare not let Daniel [Steinhaur] pass through Sheffield to Bristol, without sending a line or two with my kindest love. This may be the shortest letter I ever wrote to you, but

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I am sure it will not be the least welcome. On my birthday (Nov. 4.), after many delays, and misgivings, and repentings, I wrote to Fulneck for readmission into the Brethren's congregation, and on Tuesday, Dec. 6., the lot fell to me in that pleasant place, and on Sunday last I was publicly invested with my title to that goodly heritage. The dreadfully tempestuous weather, and severe indisposition from a cold, prevented me from being personally present when the congregation acknowledged me as one of her members, and recommended me with prayer and thanksgiving to Him who is especially her Head and Elder. To him and to his people I have again devoted myself, and may he make me faithful to my covenant with him, as I know he will be faithful to his covenant with me! Rejoice with me, my dearest friends, for this unspeakable privilege bestowed on so unworthy and ungrateful a prodigal as I have been. Tell all the good brethren and sisters whom I knew at Bristol, this great thing which the Lord hath done unto me. Oh, how glad shall I be at some future time to be preserved in life by his merciful care to meet as one of them in your chapel! Particularly remember me, as if individually named to each. Tell sister Parminter that I hope to hear her call me brother, and not make an apology. My best prayers for you all, including especially John-James and Harriet.

"Your affectionate brother,

"J. MONTGOMERY."

It will be very obvious to every person acquainted with the duties and privileges of "church-fellowship," in the usual and indeed in the only real meaning of the phrase, that these could hardly be more than casually participated by an individual residing at the distance of forty miles from his brethren. In Montgomery's case this inconvenience was largely but not wholly compensated by he favourable circumstances in which he had been providentially placed. Living, as we have said, at too great a distance from his brethren to worship with them

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otherwise than occasionally, he continued his Sabbath and week-night attendance at the Methodist chapel with wonted regularity; and rendered his acceptable services to every evangelical denomination with his accustomed readiness; so much so, indeed, that it may be doubted whether even those of his Christian colleagues who were most familiar with him in these engagements, ever suspected that the more fond and frequent mention of his paternal church implied any new or nearer relation to it.

In the autumn the poet paid a short visit to Scarborough, a record of which he has preserved in the verses "To Margaret"— Margaret Gee.*

James Montgomery to Miss Gales.

"Scarborough, Sept. 3. 1814.

"DEAR SARAH,

"Will you accept this [communication] in preference to the episode from Ossian, for the 'Portfolio?' I have thought of many subjects for you since I left home, but this is the only one that I have attempted. If you prefer Ossian, send me one line (I ask no more, though a thousand would be a thousand times more welcome) to say so, and I will immediately return you a page of introduction to explain the plan on which it has been executed. Though I have really done my best under disadvantageous circumstances to serve you on this occasion, I shall be very glad if the contributions of your other correspondents prove so numerous and excellent, that you have no room for mine, except in the acknowledgment of 'rejected addresses' at the end. Give my kindest remembrance to your sisters.

---

* Daughter of Thomas Gee, Esq., of Ackworth Moor Top. She died October 28. 1846; the poet's prayer having been fully realised in her useful life and happy death.—*Works*, p. 346.

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Every day I remember you all, and pray for you, that you may enjoy every blessing which I feel I want for myself.

"I am, sincerely and affectionately,

"Your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"P.S.—If Conder has sent me Wordsworth's new poem, I wish you would forward it to me by coach when *you* can spare it.* I will be your debtor for the postage of this letter, for I should 'blush' to give it in at the post-office, this is such a quizzing place.

The "Portfolio" was a little periodical conducted by Miss Gales, and circulated in manuscript among a small circle of friends. Montgomery's essay, which was never before printed, will be found at the end of this volume.† The episode of Morna, from Ossian, is published.‡

Writing to his brother Ignatius from the same place (Sept. 21.), he says:—

"Here, where, as I have repeatedly said, I have had nothing to do, except to do nothing—if I may be allowed

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* "As to Wordsworth's poem [the 'Excursion'], you shall at least have the reading of it, and high gratification it will afford you. It is noble and elevated, like the mountains of his favourite scenery, and severely beautiful as their embosomed lake, when, tranquil as a mirror, it reflects every cloud and every star of the summer heavens. . . . . I receive from you sadly-plaining accounts of your growing infirmities. I am afraid that 'Iris' of yours is as troublesome a mistress as my lady 'Eclectic,' and that you harass yourself sometimes very unnecessarily with a trifold anxiety about the paper—the yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow; the thing to be done, the thing being done, and the thing when done; and that you find six days in a week too few, or rather too short; for who would wish to interpolate one day more between his sabbaths!"—*Conder*, August 31. 1814.

† Appendix A. ‡ Works, p. 240.

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an absurdity to express my total resignation to indolence — *I have not even done that!* I can scarcely tell you how the time has been spent, otherwise than by saying, that I have eaten, and drunk, and slept, and walked as much, and written and thought as little, as I could. I have lived as much as the weather, which generally has been delightful, and my strength, which has been gradually increasing, would permit me, out of doors; enjoying the sunshine and the air on this open and mountainous coast, as if I had only just learned to see and to breathe, and were speedily to cease again to do either, and therefore were resolved to make the best of my time. Excepting, therefore, the return, in a very troublesome degree, of the complaint with which I left Bristol in October last, I am exceedingly benefited both in frame and spirits by my residence of nearly five weeks here. I am about returning home, with a heart I trust deeply and indelibly impressed with a sense of humble gratitude to Him whose mercies are new to me every morning, and whose goodness and loving kindness have followed me all the days of my life. It cannot be *his* will to cast me away finally, after preserving me so long and so graciously, — nay, his will concerning me must be my salvation, if I do not perversely neglect to avail myself of the opportunities multiplied and continued to me under all circumstances.

"I am in a great boarding-house, but have private apartments, and only join the company at dinner and supper. I have, therefore, no more of this miscellaneous society than suits my own inclination, and is necessary to keep me from stagnating into utter selfishness, the consequence of too much retirement."

It was on his return from Scarborough, that, being detained at Leeds, he made that "Six miles' tour," so pleasantly described in "Prose by a Poet."* "My old Nurse," alluded to at the opening of the narrative, was Fulneck, the poet's *Alma Mater;* and many of the

* Vol. i. p. 159.

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objects described or indicated along the road, will be recognised by those who happen to be familiar with the district. The whole paper is illustrative of that mixed tone of lively sentiment and moral reflection, in which the author at that period so much delighted to indulge, including also a reference to those more awful realities of the Christian religion, the present impression of which he always so deeply felt. The verses entitled "A Mother's Love," were written at the request of Dr. Cracknell, of Weymouth, to accompany a print of Timothy, as a child, instructed in the Holy Scriptures by his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. We are not aware that this engraving ever appeared. But the poet mainly derived the tenderness of his stanzas from a knowledge of the maternal tenderness and fidelity of his sister-in-law, Agnes, the mother of the Rev. John James Montgomery: from her testimony, especially, he described or rather indicated what it is—

"To bring a helpless babe to light,
Then, while it lies forlorn,
To gaze upon that dearest sight,
And feel herself new-born;
In its existence lose her own,
And live and breathe in it alone;—
This is a Mother's love."

The striking sonnet, entitled the "Crucifixion," from the Italian of Crescembini, and the verses "On the Adult Schools of Sheffield and Bristol," also appeared this year.

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CHAP. XLII.

1815.

REFLECTIONS ON THE NEW YEAR. — BUONAPARTE'S ESCAPE FROM ELBA. — POLITICAL SENTIMENTS. — LETTER TO DR. RAFFLES. — REVIEW OF WORDSWORTH'S "EXCURSION." — SOUTHEY'S "RODERICK." — LETTER FROM MR. SOUTHEY. — MISSIONARY SOCIETY. — DR. COKE. — BATTLE OF WATERLOO. — THE "IRIS." — VISIT TO RAITHBY HALL. — THE "RETREAT." — VISIT TO LONDON. — "NIGHT IN A STAGE COACH." — BRISTOL. — VISIT TO TAUNTON. — MASBRO' ACADEMY. — MONTGOMERY AND GEORGE BENNET SOLICIT SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR IT. — MR. AND MRS. GILBERT. — MONTGOMERY IN THE PULPIT. — TRACT ON "FELLING COLLIERY." — TRACT WRITING — LETTER TO DR. RAFFLES.

"To every one on earth, the year in which he was born is the greatest in the series of time; but beyond time, the year in which he died will be the chief in his remembrance, for on *it* hangs eternity. At the beginning then of a new year, an era of peace, it is peculiarly our duty and our pleasure to pray for the happiness of the age in which we live, the nation of which we are subjects, and the individuals with whom, by ties of kindred, of friendship, or of neighbourhood, we are connected. It is, indeed, our prayer for all within our little sphere, that while they live and when they die they may enjoy peace in their native land, peace in their families, peace in their own bosoms, and peace with their God."* But these and other expressions of satisfaction on the general cessation of hostilities

* Iris, Jan. 17. 1815.

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throughout Europe and in America, did not long continue applicable: the "universal peace," of which Montgomery wrote so fondly in the earlier part of this as at the close of the preceding year, was destined suddenly and unexpectedly to give place to one of the fiercest and most momentous martial conflicts recorded in history.

In the month of March, the exile of Elba broke his parole of honour, and soon appeared at the head of a powerful army in the heart of France; and the editorial pen which had for twenty years past pursued the movements of the Emperor with a perseverance only surpassed by the sword of his conqueror, was unwillingly resumed to descant on the new fortunes, and, as it fell out, to record the final humiliation of this extraordinary man. Buonaparte's progress to Paris is thus described by Montgomery:—

"He passed through the country like a south wind in spring, dissolving the frost on the mountains, and flooding the valleys with numberless streams; the snow-image of Bourbon-royalty melted before his breath, and the whole nation flowed round his feet, as slowly he ascended the throne whence he had lately been hurled headlong, but which he now beheld vacant, and where in a moment he found himself on the highest pinnacle of glory which fallen man or fallen spirit ever attained in this world of vicissitude. This may be conceded to him; for it is the impotence of folly to deny his victorious prowess, consummate policy, and marvellous good fortune in this achievement. His former exploits had equalled him at least with Alexander and Cæsar. We know that this is denied; but it is only denied by those who will not 'give the devil his due,' unless he is on their side; for can any man in his sober senses believe that for sixteen years all the veteran armies of the continent were beaten by a poltroon, and all the hoary-headed statesmen outwitted by a fool? . . . . Of that enterprise

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we must now speak as it is in itself, regardless of the heroic character which it assumes to awe us into admiration of the mind that could conceive, and the energy that could execute a plan so bold, so original, and so complete in all its operations. We must then deliberately declare our opinion, that, so far as we are yet able to judge, it is the most wicked individual act that ever was committed by king or conqueror since the world began, being pregnant with more evil, branded with blacker guilt, and worthy of severer punishment, than any aggression on the repose of society recorded in history. . . . . A war—a war like the last, which was like no other — appears inevitable, not so much because it *cannot* be avoided, as because it *will not.* Every soldier who shall fall in that conflict will be a murdered man: and on the head of him who might have prevented the mischief by his mere forbearance, but who has precipitated it by his unpardonable ambition, be the blood of every victim!"*

Adverse as the general opinion of Englishmen was to the propriety of entertaining any pacific overtures with Buonaparte after his violation of the treaty of Fontainebleau, even when he was in the French capital, Montgomery, on the other hand, was for a time in favour of that forbearance on the part of this country which had not been exercised by the enemy towards it. After a long preliminary argument, he says:—

"We will meet the subject fairly; it is desirable to have peace as long as we can. The treaty of Paris may be maintained, whoever is sovereign of France. Buonaparte, the present sovereign, professes to maintain it. We do not believe him; but we would put him to the proof; we would wait till he broke it,—and he would break it at his peril. . . . . If we might hazard a prophesy on the contest, which now appears inevitable, we would say, *the beginners will be the losers.*"†

* Iris, April 4. 1815. † Ibid. May 2. 1815.

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These are not like the sentiments of a man who would "inflame the public mind against our neighbours," nor are they "calculated to '*embroil them and us in perpetual wars.*'" Yet such was the charge seriously and bitterly brought against him by a correspondent whose letter he published; and which thus concludes:—"Let me tell you, sir, it would be better you had a millstone round your neck, and were cast into the sea, than [that you should] add the size of an atom towards the destruction of your fellow-creatures." Montgomery at once replies:—"We do not hesitate to subscribe to our correspondent's denunciation against us, if by anything that we have said or done on this occasion we have wilfully made ourselves participant in the guilt of Buonaparte, as all those will be who urge the people of England or the continent to hostilities that can by any means be avoided."

Had the dreadful alternative of *peace* or *war*, at this moment, been suspended on the decision of the editor of the "Iris," we are persuaded there was not an individual living who would have made greater sacrifices to prevent any effusion of human blood: but conflict was inevitable; and he who would rather have been sunk with a millstone about his neck into the depths of the sea than have contributed a particle of influence towards the destruction of his fellow-creatures was, in a few months, called upon to celebrate a victory obtained by his countrymen in arms and their allies over the common enemy of Europe, unequalled in the annals of British history. It should be added, that while by men of one party the editor was reproached with abetting sanguinary measures, he was, by those of another party, upbraided with being too pacific in his tone!

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James Montgomery to the Rev. Thomas Raffles.

"Sheffield, April 11. 1815.

"My dear Friend,

"Mr. Mather has just shown me a letter from you, announcing your intention to be at Sheffield on Friday. I did not think that in such a letter there would be an expression that would not please me, yet in this I find one which I like so little, that I will take the liberty of protesting against it. You say you *must* return on Monday. You must *not:* don't be either angry or frightened; I do not say so; I only wish I durst, and that I had influence over you to *constrain a voluntary compliance* on your part. But as I cannot presume so far on the interest that I have in your friendship, I will entreat you as a humble petitioner, on behalf of many hundred young people, who form a Missionary Association here, and who hold their anniversary on Monday evening, to consider again whether you cannot for once do a thing impossible; and though you *must* return on Monday morning, determine that you *will* stay over Monday evening. Recollect that between Sheffield and Liverpool is only one day's journey. It certainly has not been 'given out' that you *would* be present at the Juvenile Missionary Meeting, but that meeting was adjourned from Easter Monday in the hope that you *might.* I cannot promise you any great entertainment on the occasion, but I can promise you an opportunity of doing good in a good cause that needs every assistance. 'Come over and help us.' We do not want you to beg—you will have enough to do in that way on Sunday; but we want you to awaken generous sympathies in the breasts of the old, and to give seasonable encouragement to the zeal and exertions of the young, towards carrying on the greatest and the best work in the world—the work of God himself. If you comply with this request, I am sure you will never repent; if you do not, I almost wish you may. I find you will have pleasant quarters here in a very kind family. I am only a bachelor; I have heard it said that you are one no longer; but I will not wish you joy—I

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mean I will not *say* that I do,—for I cannot help wishing you every blessing of this life and the next, in my heart,—unless you accede to my present petition. Pray do not disappoint me; I am not alone in this request; I am the proxy of six hundred millions of pagans, and how many Jews, Mahometans, and Christians, verily I know not.

"I am very truly, your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"The Rev. Thomas Raffles, Liverpool."

We have seen that while sojourning at Scarborough in the preceding autumn, he was anxious to receive Wordsworth's "Excursion," which Conder had promised to lend him. He read the poem with deep interest, appreciated its merits and defects, covered the ample margins of many of its pages with short-hand notes, and thus, almost involuntarily on his part, originated another "Eclectic" article, which was printed in the January number of this year (pp. 13—39.). The reviewer, while he vindicates the poet's claim to the proud distinction of having executed "a literary work that *will* live," laments that, amidst emanations of genius so brilliant, and speculations on the philosophy of human feeling often so striking and so just, there should be such an entire absence of recognition of, not to say of allusion to, the religion of the New Testament. Plainly and at length, but tenderly and with respect, is this peculiarity dwelt upon; and the solemn warning of the preacher mingles with the sober judgment of the critic.

"The love of Nature is the purest, the most sublime, and the sweetest emotion of the mind, of which the senses are the ministers; yet the love of Nature *alone* cannot ascend from earth to heaven, conducting us, as by the steps of Jacob's ladder, to the love of God; nor can it descend from heaven to earth, leading us, by similar gradations, to the

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universal love of man; otherwise it had not been necessary for him 'who thought it not robbery to be equal with God' to take upon himself 'the form of a servant,' and die, 'the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God by HIMSELF.'"

It is gratifying to be able to add, that these remarks were received by him whom they most concerned, in a similar spirit to that by which they were dictated.

"Southey," says Conder, in a note to Montgomery, "showed your review of the 'Excursion' to Wordsworth, who was much pleased with it, and desired him to convey to the author his sense of the very able and very handsome manner in which the work was treated, and especially of the spirit in which the criticism is written."

Southey, as already mentioned, sent to Montgomery large portions of "Roderick, the last of the Goths," in manuscript; what remarks were made upon them by the latter in return, we regret to be unable to say; but the free and the deliberate opinion of the Sheffield poet on the work of his friend, after it appeared in print, will be found in the April number of the "Eclectic" (pp. 352—368.). The review is written in a generous and discriminating tone: Roderick is ranked "high among the works that reflect peculiar lustre on the present era of English poetry;" but the author is urged to attempt a higher flight, with a more commanding theme, and "Alfred" is suggested, though not named. "This theme has been the hope of many a youthful bard, and the despair of many an elder one." The reviewer contrasts the radical disadvantage under which Southey laboured by the adoption of subjects which had not a *national* interest, as compared with Scott, whose heroes were almost all popular, and the

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scenery of his poems familiar to the reader. Hence, as he justly remarks, the epics of the Laureate,

"Though they do frequently awaken sensibilities common to all men, and appeal to sympathies universal through society; though they abound with adventures marvellous and striking; with characters boldly original; with sentiments pure, and tender, and lofty; with descriptions rich, various, and natural; though in these they exhibit all the graces and novelties of a style peculiarly plastic, eloquent, and picturesque; yet, by an infelicity in the choice of subjects, they are addressed to readers who have either a national antipathy against the burthen of them, as to the dishonour of their country in 'Joan of Arc;' an indifference to superhuman exploits and sufferings, as in 'Thalaba;' a horror of barbarity, as in the Mexican scenes of 'Madoc;' a resolute incredulity of monstrous and unclassical mythology, as in 'Kehama;' or an ignorance of the history, and unconcern for the fate of the heroes, as in many instances in 'Roderick, the last of the Goths,'"—

against whose character, as delineated by the poet, the critic had some still stronger objections of a moral nature. Southey read the review, and attributed it to the right source, though he does not mention it in the following letter.

Robert Southey to James Montgomery.

"Keswick, May 29. 1815.

"My dear Montgomery,

"The first thing I have to say relates to Wordsworth. I put into his hands your review of the 'Excursion,' and he desired me to tell you how much he was gratified by it,—by the full and liberal praise which it accorded him,—by the ability and discrimination which were shown; but, above all, by the spirit which it breathed, which is so unlike the prevailing tone of criticism.

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"Secondly,—but first in importance,—now that the fine season is arrived, will you fulfil in summer the purpose which was frustrated in autumn, and come to visit me? Neither you nor I need be reminded of the uncertainty of life; we are now neither of us young men, and if we suffer year after year to pass by, we may, perhaps, never know each other in the body. I want to have the outward and visible Montgomery in my mind's eye—the form and tangible image of my friend. Come, and come speedily. There is a coach from Leeds to Kendal, and one from Kendal here: write, and fix the time for coming. Wordsworth, who is now in London, will probably be home in about a fortnight, and both he and Lloyd (with whom you will be much interested) are very desirous of seeing you.

"I think your objection to the warlike part of Roderick's character is not well founded; it would be so, if I had designed him as a model of Christian perfection; and yet though wars are most unquestionably forbidden by the Gospel, there are wars of that description in which it is allowable to take part, unless we suppose that even self-defence is unlawful, and that is an absurdity. But, without entering into that question, Roderick acts under what was then the universal, and is still the general belief, that he was doing his duty in making war against the cruel enemies of his country, with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength. If I proceed with 'Oliver Newman,' of which I have as yet only written the first short canto, I shall pursue the Quaker principle as far as it can be carried without violating an instinct; and, after leading Oliver through many trials of patience, place him in a situation whence it becomes his clear duty to cut a man down with a tomahawk. You exhort me to take an English story, and I would fain do so, if our history offered one to my satisfaction: but I have often and often revolved it in my mind without success. At present I am wholly occupied in prose; my concluding volume of the 'History of Brazil' is in the press, and it will not be long before that of the 'Peninsular War' be in the printer's hands also. I have work before me of this kind to an extent which you will be surprised to see;

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I shall not be out of the printer's hands for several years, if I live so long.

"The apprehensions under which you last wrote are fully confirmed, and Europe is once more involved in war, by the ambition of a single individual, whom I verily believe to have accumulated a heavier load of guilt upon his soul than any human being ever did before him. I could almost persuade myself that this is permitted in order to draw upon him and his atrocious army and that guilty city of Paris the punishment due to their crimes. The game which he is now playing proves his weakness, which he must feel very severely before he could court the Jacobins and affect to talk of liberty. I am sorry to see the Jacobins act with him; for I would fain have believed that with all their dreadful errors, they set out with a noble principle; but they are now proving that their only impulse at present is a feeling of personal hatred to the Bourbons, which Louis XVIII. is far from deserving. I look to the war with anxiety, but not with fear; on our part it is so just, so called for by every proper feeling and sound principle, that nothing can oppose it, except that vile infatuation which has made a few persons cling to Buonaparte through all his crimes.

"I thought you would be pleased with the party whom I directed to you in the autumn. . . . The sale of 'Roderick' has exceeded my expectations; a third edition is going to press. I have seen no review of it, but can perceive more faults than the most malicious critic will point out; and I have a happy indifference to criticism, which proceeds, I suppose, as much from temperament as philosophy. Write and tell me when you will come. Remember me to Mr. Gilbert when you see him. I shall rejoice to see him again. God bless you.

"Yours, very affectionately,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY.

"Mr. James Montgomery, Sheffield."

On May 16. Montgomery read at a public meeting the *First* Report of the "Methodist Missionary Society

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of the Sheffield District," which he had written at the desire of the committee. Carver Street Chapel was crowded on the occasion; and every one was solemnly impressed with the allusion of the reader to the sudden and mysterious death of an eminent individual, upon whom, till that moment, the direction and maintenance of the Wesleyan mission cause had appeared almost entirely to devolve:—

"Dr. Coke," said Montgomery, "departed for the East, under a deep impression that he was specially called thither, and in his own words, in his last days, he 'only lived for India.' Called thither he was, but it was only, like Moses, to show the way; younger and stronger men than he, like Caleb and Joshua, were appointed to go up and possess the promised land by the expulsion of the Canaanites, in long, and hard, and glorious warfare. . . . . Though Dr. Coke is removed, on whom, for many years*, the burthen of providing for the missions principally lay,—being dead he yet speaketh; in his example he yet lives,—and his example is of more value to the cause of Christ at this day, than his presence would have been, otherwise we are bound to believe that his presence would have been continued among us. The work had already become too mighty for him to perform, and it was daily enlarging. Not one man can be found in the whole Methodist connexion to fill his place. The whole Methodist connexion itself must fill that place!"

How immediately, generously, and perseveringly this advice was realised, the history of the home proceedings of the Wesleyan Missionary Society through subsequent years is the best evidence.

It fell to Montgomery's lot to record in his newspaper the memorable battle of Waterloo, on the 18th

* Dr. Coke crossed the Atlantic no less than eighteen times for objects connected with religion.

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of June; and if the expression of his joy on this occasion was at the moment apparently less exuberant than that manifested by some of his contemporaries, it was only because his horror on contemplating in its immediate reality the immense carnage of that terrible field was but partially mitigated by his faith in the final results of a victory which time has shown to be so momentous, so glorious. In prospect of a hostile engagement, so fearful as that which impended at the time, he had, as we have seen, ventured to predict that "the beginners would be the losers:" this remark, which drew upon him the malediction of sundry hot-headed politicians, was justified by the event; and in the first paper which he published after the battle, he repeated it, adding, "This onset is an omen that our presumption may be fulfilled; Buonaparte was the beginner, and Buonaparte has lost the day. May he never recover what he has lost; and may he lose what he yet holds!" *

In the "Iris" of July 4. the editor commemorated the twenty-first anniversary of his management of the paper.

"It is," says he, "twenty-one years, this day, since the 'Iris' was first published by its present editor. The motto adopted for it has been preserved in the title ever since —

'Ours are the plans of fair delightful Peace,
Unwarpt by party rage, to live like brothers,'—

and we trust that the spirit of this motto, however imperfectly, erringly, or unfashionably displayed, has been equally preserved in its pages. Meanwhile, a contrary maxim and a contrary spirit have ruled the counsels of princes, and determined the destinies of their subjects: war, open, uni-

* Iris, June 27. 1815.

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versal, exterminating, incessant war has either been countenanced, avowed, instigated, or practised throughout Christendom; and the provinces of Europe have been subject to mightier revolutions and more calamitous reverses, than were ever before experienced among enlightened nations, divided into independent sovereignties, since the world stood. Against this unnatural and horrible order of things our feeble voice has uniformly been lifted up; we have cried 'Peace! Peace!' when there *was* no peace, and when there *could* be none, because those in whose hands were the swords of the earth were determined that there *should* be none. This paper, therefore, has not been a mere gossiping chronicle of ordinary occurrences,—of births, marriages, and deaths; of accidents, adventures, amusements, vanities, charities, fashions, crimes, and executions. It has recorded events, pressing in rapid succession before our eyes, in the brief space of twenty-one years, greater in number, magnitude, and consequences than can be collected from the surviving materials of history for ten times that period in any preceding era of human existence. And this age of marvels is not yet at an end: no sooner is one woe past than another woe cometh; what vials of wrath remain unexpended, God only knows—may he shorten the days, and yet give us peace in *our* time!" *

The peace which the Christian politician thus seasonably and fervently prayed for, was happily accomplished in a way and to an extent even more marvellous in many respects than the war which preceded it. The cessation of hostilities in the victorious issue of the cause of England—of Europe, diffused a glow of patriotic gratitude over the mind of Montgomery, which, as soon as some security was obtained against the present chances of a fresh rupture by the exile of Buonaparte to the remote island of St. Helena, he endeavoured to communicate to the readers of the "Iris."

* Iris, July 4. 1815.

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In the autumn of this year, Montgomery had a severe attack of quinsy, a complaint to which he appeared peculiarly liable. On becoming convalescent, he yielded to the earnest solicitation of his friend, Robert Carr Brackenbury, Esq., to pay a visit to that devoted Christian gentleman, at his pleasant residence — Raithby Hall, near Spilsby, in Lincolnshire.* Thither he went in the month of September; and as Mr. Brackenbury had a cottage at Skegness, they spent some time together, very pleasantly, on the coast. The place just named, was, as the poet used to say, one of the least interesting he ever visited as a village — a mere strip of sandbank on this side, and a strip of water beyond: but the latter was the ocean; and upon *that* he was never tired of looking. One afternoon when, to use his own terms, "the sea was as smooth and green as a common," he watched a thunder-storm arise in the distance, traverse the intermediate space, pass in its transient gloom and flashes over the spot where he stood, and, proceeding inland, disappear behind him. A remark being made about the "law of storms," Montgomery added, "I thought nothing at the time of the philosophy of the storm, my eyes and ears alone being engaged with the grandeur of the phenomenon." It was here that he first noticed how, when rising at the full, over an horizon of waters, in some cases —

> "—— The moon's lengthened image appears
> A column of gold on the waves."

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* The house was built in 1779; Mr. Wesley mentions visiting it when it was just finished, and preaching in the small chapel adjoining. "It was," says he, "quickly filled with deeply serious hearers. I was much comforted among them, and could not but observe, while the landlord and his tenants were standing together, how —

'Love, like death, makes all distinctions void.'"

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The moon, in this instance, was the harvest moon; and it not only lighted the pensive and poetical visitor to many a pleasant spot in Mr. Brackenbury's grounds, but to a rustic edifice in the parterre, where he found, addressed to himself, a copy of verses, to which he sweetly and gratefully responded in his own stanzas entitled "The Retreat." *

From Raithby he proceeded to London; but of his movements here we have no memorials, beyond the fact of his having met a literary party at Messrs. Longmans', amongst whom were Alexander Chalmers, the compiler of the most voluminous collection of the English poets ever published, and the value of which, we think, has not been duly estimated; and Dr. Bateman, a man possessing a strong mind, and exercising a sound judgment on matters connected with medical science and practice, as the estimation of his brethren of the faculty, and especially his writings on professional subjects, abundantly proved; but who had, unhappily, imbibed notions repugnant to the grand truths of divine revelation. After the death of this gentleman, in 1821, a memoir of him was published, disclosing the interesting fact of his conversion to Christianity, and describing the deep impression which the doctrines of the Gospel had made, as well as the wonderful change which they, as leading to a spirit of faith and prayer, had wrought in a mind so long and so strongly prejudiced against them. Montgomery received a copy of this memoir, under the frank of Joseph Butterworth, Esq. M.P., accompanied with a request that he would show it to any gentleman of the profession to whom he might think its contents applicable. He regarded it, he said, as "a striking confirmation of the internal evidence of the truth of

* Works, p. 332.

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Christianity influencing the mind, and as the confession of a sincere believer; and more especially so, in the case of such a man as Dr. Bateman, who had been rather reserved in general intercourse, and always extremely so on the subject of religion; the force of divine truth, therefore, must have produced convictions and emotions peculiarly strong, to have induced him to yield his spirit and open his mind in so remarkable a manner."

From London, and after having also spent a few days at Woolwich, Montgomery proceeded to Bristol, September 23., to visit his brother Ignatius. His poetical meditation during "A night in a stage coach," on this journey, is printed in his works*, and contains some fine "thoughts and images," especially the comparison of the daylight appearance of the harvest-moon in its wane, which had risen to him so gloriously when at the full, over the sea at Skegness, to

"The fragment of a cloud."

He was at this time very unwell; and the irksomeness of such a long, solitary, nocturnal ride was hardly less than terrifying to his sensitive nerves and shattered frame. He, however, reached the city in safety; and after such a journey, in such a state, some conception may be formed of his pleasure when the first sound he heard on alighting in the street, was an exclamation, "My uncle!" from his brother's little boy, who had accompanied his father to meet the poet, as well as of the feelings embodied in this verse,—

"At length, I reach my journey's end;
Welcome that well-known face!

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* Works, p. 224.

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I meet a Brother and a friend,
I find a resting-place."

It was during this visit that Bird, the accomplished Bristol artist, induced the Rev. Ignatius Montgomery to persuade his brother to sit to him for his portrait. The likeness, however, was more spirited than faithful; for the painter, in his attempt to exhibit the fire of genius in the face, gave it an air of fierceness foreign to the reality: this, with an affected attitude, materially lessened its resemblance to the original. The artist gave Montgomery a cabinet portrait of Robert Southey, which always was hung in his sitting-room, and highly prized for the subject's sake. The poet was still more gratified by the opportunity of dining, accompanied by his brother, with the venerable and philanthropic Richard Reynolds, who died in the following year, and whose memory and worth were embalmed in the "Tributary Verses" of the Sheffield bard. He was also persuaded to visit Taunton, where he spent a day or two very pleasantly with his friends Young and Standert; the lively conversation of the latter gentleman especially, preventing the poet from being either silent or sad in his company. The parties had never met before, except in their letters; and in reply to a remark of Montgomery's, to the effect that Standert "looked like himself on paper," the latter wrote, "You I certainly should have known; I should have embraced you and named you, had I met you in the deserts of Arabia: but I have less imagination, and your character makes a much nearer approach to ideal beauty. Ten thousand thanks to you for journeying to Taunton, to seal our friendship bodily."

Through the intervention of his friend, George Bennet, Esq., Montgomery was induced to take an

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active interest in the success of the "Rotherham Independent College," an academy erected in 1795, at Masborough, chiefly at the expense of Joshua Walker, Esq., one of the owners of the celebrated iron foundry at that place, for the education of young men who had devoted themselves to the Christian ministry among the Congregational bodies. The Rev. M. Philips, the first classical tutor, left the college in 1811. The Rev. Joseph Gilbert, who succeeded him, having soon afterwards lost his wife, fixed his thoughts upon the eldest daughter of the Rev. Isaac Taylor, of Ongar, in Essex, whom he knew only as one of the authors of the beautiful "Hymns for Infant Minds;" and from the very favourable testimony of Montgomery, who had once been a delighted visitor at their father's house, Mr. Gilbert determined at once to proceed thither, and—*venit, vidit, vicit*—Anne Taylor presently became Mrs. Gilbert. Our poet, as being also the only person whom she had previously known in Yorkshire, was always a doubly welcome guest at "the minister's house" at Masborough, when he attended the anniversaries of the academy.* The report of the Masborough Institu-

* On one of these occasions, Montgomery having called to bid Mrs. Gilbert "good night," and finding her gone to chapel, he placed within a lady's shawl, which lay on the table, a rose and a hoya, flowers which had been given to him by Mrs. Walker, accompanied by the following bagatelle, written impromptu in pencil, as a memento of his call:—

"Queen Mab has been here,
But you need not to fear;
She leaves you flowers,
Not gathered two hours:
On their beauty she gazed,
Delighted, amazed;
Fresh, fresh was their bloom,
Sweet, sweet their perfume;

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tion, which was read at the Midsummer meeting this year, was written by Montgomery, and commemorated the death and munificence of Joshua Walker, Esq., the founder, the patron, and indefatigable friend of the school. The following is the opening paragraph:—

"In the primitive church, it pleased 'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners' revealed himself to mankind, to employ 'unlearned men,' like Peter and John, to preach the Gospel. And he gave them a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay nor resist. But

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And yet she can't tell
How their changes befel;
But their spirits are fled;
In a word — they are dead!
Yet could she not catch,
While keen on the watch,
One shadow that stole
O'er a part, or the whole,
Of the one or the other,
The Sister and Brother;
But none she perceives,
By their poor withered leaves,
While their charms she was eying
Their *living* was *dying*.
Each instant unseen,
Their red, white, and green,
Were waning away,
In lovely decay.

"If Mab had but time
To finish her rhyme,
She would leave you a stale
Moral end to her tale;
But hush! not a word—
She is gone, like a bird;
O ne'er be your nest
In your absence possest
By bird of worse omen,—
Now guess my true *nomen*."

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even in the apostolic age, when the miraculous gifts of the Spirit accompanied the testimony of the word of faith, Apollos, 'an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures,' and Paul, 'brought up at the feet of Gamaliel,' were called to exercise the same ministry; and the latter bequeathed to posterity a greater portion of that inheritance of evangelical truth which we possess in the Bible, than any other inspired writer. It is readily admitted that God, who sends by whom he will send, frequently works signs and wonders in the conversion of sinners by the weakest human agents; yet these are not successful either by ignorance or inertness, but in the unwearied exercise of their utmost powers in their Master's service. We are commanded to love the Lord our God *supremely*, and to serve him *only*; it follows, that we must serve him in the same manner as we love him, with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; with all our corporeal and intellectual faculties, with all our affections and all our attainments. The Independent churches in this kingdom, for a long period, have proved by experience the benefit of being served by pastors who, while they are led by the Spirit of God into the knowledge of the truths necessary to salvation, have also been instructed in those estimable branches of human learning which enlarge, enlighten, ennoble, and enrich the understanding, the imagination, the feelings, and the judgment."

Mr. Bennet did not confine his zeal for the success of the academy at Masborough to home attention merely; he made several tours in different parts of the country to obtain the names of subscribers to its funds among the wealthier members of the Congregational churches. On this benevolent errand he visited Liverpool in the course of the present year; and there Montgomery joined him on his homeward route from Bristol. The two friends spent two or three days together at the hospitable mansion of Robert Spear, Esq., of Millbank, on the Cheshire side of the Mersey, and oppo-

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site to Holling's Green. They found residing in the house a talented young Scotchman, of the name of Smith, who acted as private tutor and domestic chaplain in the family; preaching on the Sunday in a large room, which had been fitted up for that purpose. After family prayer on the Sabbath morning, good Mrs. Spear, who seems to have had some skill in the "discerning of spirits," said to her guest, in a half-earnest, half-hesitating tone, — "Mr. Montgomery, we shall expect you to preach to us, and our neighbours, in *the room* this forenoon." The poet, starting at the suggestion, replied, that he had never been in a pulpit in his life; but, as he did not positively object, his hostess assumed his concurrence in her proposal. As the hour for service was drawing near, and the congregation expected, Mrs. Spear told Montgomery there was no time to lose. He, in turn, said if they would allow him to withdraw for a quarter of an hour, he would read a chapter; and if he felt at liberty in the engagement, would make such remarks as might present themselves to his mind at the moment. He accordingly went into his chamber, folded down a sheet of letter-paper, and having fixed upon Psalm cxvi. for the groundwork of his exposition, took his pencil, and hastily dotted down a series of notes of what he meant to say, feeling a reasonable degree of confidence in his ability to occupy at least half an hour, at the rate of two minutes to each verse of the Psalm. The little preaching room was well filled. Mr. Smith and Mr. Bennet gave out the hymns and engaged in prayer. The poet took his place in the pulpit, and expounded the chapter in such a spiritual, luminous, and edifying manner, that his friends prevailed upon him to take a similar part in the afternoon service. On this latter occasion he delighted his audience even more than in

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the morning, by a beautiful scriptural paraphrase of the Beatitudes, Matthew v. 1—12. This day was the first and last when he was ever induced thus formally to engage in pulpit exercise. It was probably this visit of Mr. Bennet and his friend to Holling's Green, that led to the after settlement of the Rev. Thomas Smith as minister of Nether Chapel, Sheffield, and to his long connection with the Masborough Academy as classical tutor.

It happened that while Montgomery was in Liverpool, and on a visit to the Rev. Dr. Raffles, the reverend gentleman was waited upon by a deputation from the Tract Society, who wished him to "moralise" the account of the catastrophe which occurred in 1813, at Felling Colliery, in the county of Durham, when twenty-three persons perished by an explosion of fire-damp — as upwards of ninety had done in the same works only the year preceding. Dr. Raffles declined the task, but showed the requisition and suggested the undertaking to Montgomery, who consented to do the best he could. Accordingly, this tract of "Felling Colliery" duly appeared in print; and with another, called "Solomon's Choice," formed the entire of the author's productions in this department of useful knowledge. *Montgomery:* "The Shakspeare of tract writing is probably yet unborn; nevertheless, I am persuaded that there is within the compass of the human intellect that peculiar mental power which is exactly adapted to this species of composition. He should have the strength, the originality, the simplicity, and the piety of Bunyan: brevity and perspicuity should be united in the treatment of a subject in itself striking and important." *Holland:* "Legh Richmond has written some highly interesting and very popular tracts; but evangelical as they are in tone, they are

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too ornate and sentimental in their style to suit my taste in such matters, though under this showy garb there is understood to be a real body of fact." *Montgomery:* "He says they are true; and I believe him. I can read any of his tracts; and they will continue to be read with pleasure, let him write as many as he will; but I think the style should never be imitated. Mrs. Hannah More has written some excellent tracts, of a different kind—I prefer moral tales to religious tales, on grounds both of taste and piety."

James Montgomery to the Rev. Thomas Raffles.

"Sheffield, Nov. 1. 1815.

"My dear Friend,

"You may be sure that after a five weeks' absence, I did not come home to rest and enjoy myself from the fatigues of travelling and the distress of meeting new company almost every day; for however delightful new friends may prove, certainly to me it is a most painful feeling to appear before them the first time as a stranger, though I may be aware that every prepossession on their side is in my favour. It is in my nature to be afraid of every face that I *must* see, and have not seen before; and my solitary habits have aggravated this morbid disposition to such a degree, as, in many instances, to make the pleasures which I do experience from the kind looks, and words, and acts of strangers, too dear at the price of suffering in anticipation, which they cost. But I have rambled from my purpose to the bottom of this page, and at the top of another I must return to the sentiment with which I began, — namely, that I did not come home to rest, after so uncommon an absence as five weeks. I have consequently been so much hurried with arrears of business and correspondence since my return, that it has not been in my power earlier to thank you for all the hospitality and friendship which I enjoyed, not only under your roof, but to which you introduced me in

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the circle of your numerous and excellent friends in Liverpool. Indeed, if gratitude can repay such obligations, I am sure Mrs. Hargreaves, Mrs. Raffles, and yourself would deem yourselves fully compensated for your generous and unremitted kindness to me, if you knew with what feelings I accepted it, and with what sentiments I regard it; but you have a better reward than the knowledge of my feelings, in the consciousness of your own on this occasion; and I trust you will never have cause to repent that you opened your doors and your hearts to welcome me. I have now enclosed the improvement, if improvement it can be called, on the colliers' catastrophe. You will please alter and amend it as you find necessary. I am tenacious of nothing in it, therefore spare it not; and if you discover my right eye or my right hand in any part, and it offend you, cut it off, and retain only what you can fully adopt and conscientiously promulgate. I send also copies of sundry hymns (all occasional), the lines to Miss G. [Gales] which I repeated on our way to Chilwell, and the verses to Mr. and Mrs. Brackenbury. . . . Now remember that you owe me, not in recompense for these trifling tokens of confidence, but in conformity with your own promises to me at Liverpool, certain hymns and psalms of your own, when you can find leisure to transcribe them: meanwhile, you need not delay sending me good tidings concerning yourself and the dear, kind ladies of your family, as early as may be after the receipt of this packet. I wish it may be worth carriage to you; to me it is indeed of so much value, that I shall be anxious to hear it has safely arrived; for should some unlucky knave think it a prize of bank notes, and steal it out of the coach, though he will be served right by his disappointment on opening it, I should grudge him his booty, and be tempted to wish he had cribbed something more precious, belonging to somebody else, instead of it. . . .

"I am truly, your obliged friend,

"JAMES MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. Thomas Raffles, Liverpool."

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CHAP. XLIII.

1816.

PERSECUTION OF THE PROTESTANTS IN FRANCE. — OPINIONS OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON. — EDITORIAL CONTROVERSY. — EPITAPH. — REVIEW OF BROWN'S "HISTORY OF MISSIONS." — MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE. — LETTER OF MONTGOMERY TO HIS BROTHER IGNATIUS. — RELIGIOUS ANNIVERSARIES. — A DREAM. — MISS SARAH GALES SAILS FOR THE UNITED STATES. — MONTGOMERY ACCOMPANIES HER TO LIVERPOOL. — VERSES ON HER DEPARTURE. — UNGENIAL WEATHER AND SOCIAL DISCONTENT. — LOCAL DISTRESS. — THE EDITOR AND HIS CORRESPONDENTS. — LOSES POPULARITY. — LETTER TO MR. YOUNG. — TO HIS BROTHER IGNATIUS. VERSES ON "THE DEATH OF REYNOLDS." — LETTER TO THE "REYNOLD'S SOCIETY." — "THE FOUR FRIENDS." — LAST DAYS. — ANNOUNCED PARTNERSHIP IN THE "IRIS."

THE present year, dawning, as it did, amidst such unprecedented causes of rejoicing for the Christian world, was nevertheless disgraced at its commencement by an extensive massacre of those Protestants in the South of France whom the general deliverance of Europe had placed in the power of their enemies, — the Roman Catholics of the old *régime*. The perpetrators and abettors of these barbarities pretended to justify their proceedings on the shameless plea of recrimination. "The Protestants," said they, "were the first aggressors; five-and-twenty years ago, fifteen hundred Catholics were murdered by Protestants."

It is not necessary that we should give any of the conflicting reports which were circulated at the time, in aggravation or palliation of the atrocities in ques-

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tion, except so far as they concern the subject of these memoirs. Montgomery felt for these persecuted people, not only as fellow Protestants, and worshippers of the God of his fathers under circumstances somewhat analogous to those of the old Moravians, but as the victims of political suspicion and hatred; being convinced, at the same time, that the charge of Buonapartism was a mere watchword used for purposes of havoc; consequently, he drew his pen in the cause of the sufferers, with the zeal of one who hated persecution under whatsoever character it might mask or manifest itself.

The first "Iris" which bore the figures 1816 contained a spirited article on these persecutions, in which the writer admits that "there *may* be reasons why the Protestants should be suspected to favour the late government of France rather than the present, but *these* reasons their enemies will be the last to disclose." To the question of interference on the part of the British Government, he would answer "No," but he would recommend the *people* of England to interfere, as they had done in the case of the slave-trade, by "expressing their abhorrence and detestation of the renewal of antiquated intolerance, and universally declaring not only their sympathy with the sufferers, but their determination to assist them, by repairing in some measure their loss of property, or affording them an asylum in this country from their oppressors. The sentiments of the people of England are on some occasions of as much weight as the opinions of all the courts of Europe, backed by all the armies of the allies. The Bourbons should crush the cockatrice just crawling out of its egg before it becomes a flying serpent, which they may neither have agility to catch, nor strength to strangle."

In his recapitulation a fortnight afterwards, Mont-

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gomery had occasion to notice a letter from the Duke of Wellington, addressed to the Protestant Committee in London, and which that body had been charged with "smothering and concealing, for no other cause than that their own sentiments were therein falsified on the highest authority." This letter he presumed to designate "a Gordian knot of words, which the sword of Wellington might cut,—for what can resist *that* edge? — but human skill can scarcely unravel it into English." And, after quoting from the letter a passage explanatory of the causes of the persecution, adds, "surely this is the first time, since logic was invented, that *accounting* for a thing has been deemed *falsifying* it."

The remark in the "Iris" on this subject, having been copied into the "Leeds Mercury," they brought down upon our friend the vengeance of a brother editor (of the "Leeds Intelligencer"), who commented upon them "in a style* which," said Montgomery,

* "As for the 'Sheffield Iris,' what does it say? Why, that the Duke's letter '*is a Gordian knot of words*, which the sword of Wellington might cut, but human skill can scarcely unravel it into English;' and that the letter fully supports, instead of falsifying, the assertions of the faction, as the Duke only '*accounts*' for the outrages at Nismes, but does not deny their existence! — '*a Gordian knot of words which the sword of Wellington might cut!!!*' Pretty well this for the poetical editor of the 'Iris,' and worthy to be ranked with the evaporation of *sympathy* in *feeling* so much dreaded by his fellow-labourer and brother scribe at Leeds! 'A Gordian knot of *words* to be cut by a *sword*' fresh from the cutlers' shops at Sheffield, we presume, amid the filing, and hammering, and jarring discords, and smoke and confusion, of which the poet must have caught the idea. But, however, he has made a shift to 'unravel the *knot* into *English*,' without sending to the Duke for his *sword;* and we confess he has unravelled it very much to our satisfaction. He unequivocally admits that

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"the editor of the 'Iris' so far approves, that he would never wish to be abused in any other." After quoting the words which we have given in the note, Montgomery replies:—

"In this sally of wit, argument, and eloquence, the editor of the 'Iris' regrets only one thing — but that is nothing — the little *blank* at the close, between the word '*pair*' and the admiration stop; for though he acknowledges that even that blank is so judiciously placed as to have more meaning in it than all the context, it is a great pity, that his worthy brother, from an excess of modesty, (for who dares question his courage?) should have forborne to show how much point he could have put in so small a space. As it is, the paragraph resembles a blind-worm, without a sting; or rather what is vulgarly called a *petrified snake*, of which thousands have been found about Whitby, but never a one yet with a *head-piece*."

We received from the poet the following epitaph on a good woman, whose friends had pressed him on the subject: it is dated March 3. 1816, and exhibits the twofold merit of terseness and significance:—

"She *lived*;— what farther can be said
Of all the generations dead?
She *died*;— what else can be foretold
Of all the living, young or old?

---

the Duke has *accounted* for the excesses committed in the south of France; and this is all that was ever contended for.

"The *faction* tried to *account* for them by attributing them to religious intolerance, and to the personal character of Louis and his family. The Duke's very satisfactory way of *accounting* for them is, by attributing them to political dissensions, which, he says, the king, his family, and the government, have used every means to suppress!!! '*Sympathy* evaporating in *feeling!*' and '*a Gordian knot of words which nothing but the sword of Wellington can cut!!!*' 'Sure such a pair ———!' Ha! ha! ha!"—*Leeds Intell.*, May 4. 1816.

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She lived, with death before her eye,
As one who did not fear to die;
She died, as one exchanging breath
For immortality in death:
Her dust is here,—her spirit there,—
Eternity! O tell me where!"

A review of Brown's "History of Missions," published in the month of March this year, terminated Montgomery's connection with the "Eclectic," as a contributor, though he purchased and read the work monthly as long as he lived. In an early paragraph the writer remarks —

"That it is a fact awfully illustrative of the essential depravity of the heart, that while the greatest energies of the greatest minds, the utmost means of the most enlightened nations, are, more or less, continually exercised in achieving the destruction of their species and the desolation of nature, the labours of the missionary are by numbers treated as visionary, and by others deemed expensive."

He afterwards, in allusion to the comparatively little interest which even Christian governments took in the propagation of the Gospel, makes the following striking observations: —

"In one campaign of such a war as we have seen in our days, nay, by one battle such as that of Waterloo, there is incomparably more misery inflicted and entailed, in person, in property, in peace of mind, in life and death; on all classes and conditions of society; on kings and peasants; on old men, women, and infants, immediately or remotely implicated, than was endured by all the men of God whose sufferings and achievements are recorded in these [Brown's] volumes, during a period of one hundred and fifty years; and we will add, without fear of successful contradiction, that in Greenland alone, a country overlooked by all the

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philanthropists of Europe, except a few Danish or Moravian missionaries, more good has been done to mankind, and certainly more glory given to God, than has been *directly* accomplished by all the wars of Christendom, from the days of Gustavus Adolphus to those of Napoleon Buonaparte."

This passage will show how strong a hold the evidence of the signal success of missionary efforts in Greenland already had upon the mind of the poet. It will be right here to remark that, uncompromising as Montgomery was in his denunciation of the errors of Popery, he nevertheless in this review stepped aside to recognise the missionary zeal of the Propagandists: —

"It is to the shame of Protestants, that the professors of the true faith have shown themselves far less zealous to promulgate it than the antichristian Church of Rome."— "Wherever Popery has been enforced by fire and sword, we regard the promulgators with horror, and the converts with compassion; but wherever the truths of the Gospel — the *essential* truths of the Gospel, however mingled with Roman mistakes in the interpretation — have been sincerely taught, we cannot doubt that the blessing of God has accompanied them; and it is far from being improbable that, in the day of judgment, there will rise from the remotest regions of South America, the now interdicted shores of Japan, and the impenetrable recesses of China, thousands and tens of thousands to call *those* blessed whose names are unrecorded on earth, and whose good works are as absolutely forgotten as if they had never existed."

It is doubtful whether an equally candid and liberal estimate of this large and self-sacrificing branch of ancient Jesuit labour has elsewhere been recorded by any pious Protestant author in this country.*

* Of course the reviewer was as little disposed as any one could be to favour the aggressions of Romish emissaries on the fields of Protestant missionary labour.

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In this review Montgomery propounds at some length a theory which, on the missionary platform, in the columns of his newspaper, or when led to converse on the subject of improving the heathen, he never failed to advocate,—namely, that evangelical teaching must *precede* civilisation.

"The wisdom of man says, 'first civilise barbarians, and then Christianise them;' and the wisdom of man has proved itself foolishness in every experiment of the kind which it has made, though it must be confessed that it has been too prudent or too selfish to make many. The wise counsel of God is very different. This says, go and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, whether *Greeks* or *barbarians;* if to the latter, you *will* civilise them by so doing, and just in proportion as they are *Christianised* they will be *civilised.* No motives less powerful than conviction of sin, fear of hell, faith in Christ as a Saviour, His love shed abroad in their hearts, and hope of everlasting life,—no motives less powerful than these can command attention from fierce, obstinate, sensual savages, to plans of civilisation, much less wean them from their roving, indolent, cruel habits, and make them stationary, social, gentle, self-denying beings. If there be an instance to the contrary in all the intercourse of Europeans with untutored Pagans in Asia, Africa, or America, let it be produced as a confutation of our remark; but instances in confirmation of it may be produced in every quarter of the globe, among Greenlanders, Esquimaux, Indians, Negroes, and Hottentots."*

The man who embarks capital, whether of money or good feeling, in the service of the public, as the editor of a public journal, will require all the vigilance which experience may enable him to command, not to make shipwreck of both in some

* Eclectic Review, March, 1816. vol. v. N. S. p. 223.

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of those periods of trial which will assuredly mark the hazardous enterprise. Montgomery enjoyed at this time, as a political writer, the hard-earned reputation of undoubted editorial independence, along with the approbation of his own conscience; he had nevertheless even yet to pay that tax which ingenious malice imposed on ambitious merit, as we have seen from the preceding paragraphs, and as we shall again have occasion to record in the course of the present year—a year, however, which, in spite of the horrors of religious persecutions abroad at its commencement, and the terrors of radicalism at home near its close, was not without at least one green oasis amid the sandy desert of its general history — and this was a royal wedding.

Montgomery, although himself a bachelor, had, as we have seen, a heart which deeply sympathised with the exquisite hopes and fears of wedded life, whenever these were specially presented to his notice.*

* In one of the numbers of the "Iris," about this time, appeared an extract from Southey's "Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo," and amongst the stanzas quoted was the following: —

"But there stood one whose heart could entertain
And comprehend the fulness of the joy,
The father, teacher, playmate, was again
Come to his only and his studious boy;
And he beheld again that mother's eye,
Which with such ceaseless care had watched his infancy."

That "studious boy" died soon after the publication of his father's poem; and just before the extract appeared in the "Iris," Montgomery, in a note at the foot of his column, and referring to the above stanza, makes the following tender remarks:—"These lines will convey to the reader no other picture than that of a father's happiness and his domestic joys, and the fair promise of the future. But they acquire a deeply pathetic interest from the circumstance that since they were written, that only boy, the pupil and playmate, the

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From the article which he wrote on the nuptials of the Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg and the Princess Charlotte of Wales, we shall transcribe a couple of paragraphs, one to show how he felt as a man, and the other to indicate what he thought as a political writer on the subject of that union: —

"The most joyful occurrence in ordinary life is undoubtedly a wedding, when the parties are tenderly endeared to each other, good, wise, happy, young, handsome, and rich,— we believe we arrange these qualities in the exact order in which the ladies estimate them: then indeed a wedding is a season of hope and promise, — hope, in which none but a frigid heart could anticipate disappointment,— promise, in which none but an infidel in love could suspect fallaciousness. And yet such hopes and promises, under far humbler omens, are formed every day, and dissipated every morrow of human existence. We are very willing to imagine that the royal pair, in whose recent nuptials the whole nation is now rejoicing, not by an impulse of benevolent and disinterested sympathy alone, but as partakers in their felicity, — we are willing to imagine that this royal pair are possessed of all the amiable and noble and convenient requisites above enumerated to make the marriage state happy." . . . . . .

. . . . . .

"The Prince of Coburg is a younger son of one of the smallest houses in Germany, but though one of the smallest,

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pride and joy of his father, has been suddenly removed; darkening for ever the charms of that mountain scenery, and opening through the fairest scenes of nature a vista into eternity. In these lines Mr. Southey was unconsciously preparing a son's best epitaph, the expression of a father's complacent affection; and in these the memory of that son shall outlive the record of the monumental stone."

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one of the most honourable among that populace of sovereigns, which swarm through the heterogeneous regions of that empire. He brings into the veins of the royal family of England a new current of Saxon blood pure from the fountain which warmed the heart of Alfred, the greatest and the best of princes; and though by birth the last person to whose affections he could have presumed to aspire was the most splendid heiress in the world, yet we trust that he will live to confer honour on her selection of a partner for her heart and her throne, — a heart which she has as resolutely maintained against the attempts of state busy-bodies to alienate, as in the event of a disputed succession she would assert, and defend, and establish her right to the throne." — *Iris*, May 7. 1816.

The annals of the subsequent year, in the history of England, afford an affecting commentary on these passages!

Writing to his brother Ignatius, under the date of May 19. Montgomery says: —

"At this time of the year I am full of employment with Bible, Missionary, Tract, and Sunday School Societies, which seem rather to belong to a minister of the Gospel than a printer and a poet: my tongue and my pen have continual engagements to meet. I feel at home and happy in the work, though frequently the flesh is weak when the spirit is most willing; and whatever temptations I may have to vanity, — and with such I am surrounded, — besides the traitor within my bosom, like Satan at the ear of Eve, sometimes suggesting presumptuous and sometimes desponding thoughts of myself, I have trials and experience both from without and within enough to humble me every day and every hour of every day, especially when I am in most danger of growing giddy and proud. In Passion week I went to Fulneck, and enjoyed the Holy Communion on the anniversary of that

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night on which our Lord was betrayed. It was a blessed season, because it was a heart-searching one; Good Friday also was made exceedingly sweet and solemn to my soul, though I staggered sometimes in bearing the cross up the rugged steep of Calvary; but I was borne up by the right hand of Him whom I accompanied there."

On the 21st of May he read at a public meeting "the Second Report (written also by himself) of the Methodist Missionary Society of the Sheffield District." Its more prominent features were a descriptive notice of the Island of Ceylon, as "a miniature of the whole world, so mixed is the population, and so various are the forms of religion and superstition abounding in it;" and a reference to the first-fruits of Wesleyan preaching there, in the conversion of two Buddhist priests.

On Whit Monday (June 3rd) Montgomery prepared and read the report, at the annual meeting of the Sheffield Sunday School Union. On moving a resolution, which recommended annual visits to the different schools, he took occasion to allude to the beauty and advantages of Christian union, concluding in substance as follows: —

"What is the bond of this association? Love,— Christian love, — the love of God shed abroad in our hearts and endearing us to each other. This love is not like gold, which, being expanded under the hammer, exchanges solid weight for feeble splendour! It is not like water spilled out of a vessel, and spreading over a large superficies, but presently absorbed into the earth or exhaled into the atmosphere. No,

> "'Love is a spirit all compact of fire;
> Love is a spirit, and will to heaven aspire:'

— yes; and in proportion as it rises above it spreads below,

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increasing in splendour and intensity precisely according to its elevation and diffusion. That love, I will affirm, — *that* love will never reach heaven which does not burn over the face of the whole earth, — which does not break forth from the bosom in which it is kindled, and communicate its ardour of sympathy at least to every heart of man within its reach. At this hour, if, instead of a British summer, in all its life and glory, beaming round the sanctuary in which we are assembled, this congregation were encompassed with the horrors of a Greenland winter *, and these walls, amidst a wilderness of black rocks, coasting a sea of ice, were assailed by a tempest of snow, while polar darkness fell upon the scene,— if in this crisis a little damp brushwood were kindled before the feet of our chairman, we who support him might catch the glimmerings of the lukewarm vapour, and present our ghastly visages through the smoke, like spectres emerging from invisibility. But if the fire in our midst were enlarged and enlivened by additional and excellent fuel, not only would the light and heat be gradually diffused to a wider circle of our surrounding friends, but we ourselves should be warmed and cheered more abundantly. In a word, were the pile raised, and the flame augmented, till the remotest corners of the chapel were illuminated, and the coldest spectators become sensible of a milder temperature in the atmosphere, we on this platform should be basking in the comforts of an English fireside. Thus it is in our Christian Union; to extend its beneficent influence, we must increase the vital heat of the centre, that thence it may diverge on every side; and the farther we can send the blessings we enjoy, the more must they be multiplied among ourselves; — the more fervent and cherished the fire in the heart, the wider, the brighter, the warmer the flames will expand."

Montgomery, like Coleridge, was a vivid and frequent

* His poem of "Greenland" was at this time in embryo.

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dreamer, and, as may be supposed from his peculiar temperament, could have sung of "the pains of sleep" as well as the Opium Eater, though happily never under the baneful influence of a potent and perilous drug. On the appearance of the curious poetical fragment of "Kubla Khan," Montgomery read it with intense interest, and, singularly enough, with a result somewhat analogous to that which had produced in the distempered mind of Coleridge himself that "vision in a dream," of which our friend appears to have considered his own experience in this case, phenomenally at least, as the counterpart: we give the narrative, as a "psychological curiosity," at the end of this volume.*

Twenty years having elapsed since Mr. Gales and his three sisters parted in Sheffield, it was determined that this year, Sarah, the youngest, should pay a visit to her brother, who was then residing in Washington city, U. S. Montgomery accompanied her to Liverpool, and having seen her safely on board the good ship "Lancaster," which moved out of the Mersey accompanied by more than a score gallant merchant vessels which had been detained by the weather, resigned himself to the indulgence of those feelings which would naturally arise on thus parting, perhaps for ever, with a lady whom so long an intercourse, under its peculiar circumstances, had endeared to him as a sister. On being asked by a friend, how he felt, after having parted with his charge, he laconically answered, "As happy as despair can make me!" This expression naturally suggested the notion of some emotion more tender than friendship, but with how little ground, on

* Appendix B.

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the part of the sensitive poet at least *, may be inferred from the following verses.

"TO SARAH,

"*On her Departure for America.*

"Wilt thou go, and go for ever?
No, we must not, will not part;
Gulfs and mountains cannot sever
Those whom heaven has joined in heart,
And where'er thy sojourn be,
There my thoughts shall dwell with thee.

---

* The following valedictory rhymes exhibit the sentiments of the lady herself: —

"TO MY SISTERS.

"When far removed from friends and you,
I sail across the Atlantic sea,
For ever present to your view,
Let this my painted portrait be.
For O! whatever be my lot,
By you I would not be forgot.

"Or when Columbia's shore I gain,
And meet a brother's kind embrace,—
Affection thrills through every vein,
I grasp his hand, and kiss his face,
E'en then, though happy be my lot,
I would not be by you forgot.

"For e'er I could forget the day
Which saw you all suffused in tears,
My spirit, wandering from its clay,
Must alienate both hopes and fears:
Still hovering round that favoured spot,
My spirit loves, where I am not.

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"Swiftly o'er the yielding ocean,
Winds and waves propel thy way;
While, with evanescent motion,
Like the gliding orb of day,
From our east thy vessel steer
To yon western hemisphere.

"Yet do not ask me why I roam,
And leave my friends and country too;
Why I forsake my present home,
And bid farewell to them and you?
Alas! alas! how hard the lot
Of those who rove to seek a cot!

"When time hath changed my locks to grey,
And sorrow's dew hath dimm'd my eye,
When hope no longer sheds a ray,
And retrospection brings you nigh;
O then, though cheerless be my lot,
By you I would not be forgot.

"Not like the ornaments you wear
Of gold and amber to adorn,
Or like the silken gossamer,
With easy folds so lightly worn;
These please you now; — but are they not
Prized for awhile and then forgot?

"But why this trifling theme impart
To you, in whom true worth we find —
The golden virtues of the heart,
The amber beauties of the mind?
These gems are yours — and are they not
Too precious e'er to be forgot!

"And you, my friend of early youth*,
May every good your path attend,
Your future days be peace and truth,
And all your life with virtues blend.
Thus ever happy be your lot
When I'm remote, unseen, forgot.

---

* Montgomery.

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"From the ark the gloomy raven
To and fro his flight pursued,
Though he found nor home nor haven
On the shoreless solitude:
Ah! not thus 'twixt sea and sky,
Lonely, silent, hopeless, fly.

"Rather like the dove, should roaring
Storms and floods around thee beat,
Back, thy cheerless paths exploring,
Seek again the dear retreat:
O return, return in peace,
Till the strife of waters cease.

"But should Heaven, with gales benignly,
Waft thee o'er the refluent tide,—
Though on angel wings, divinely,
Thou in triumph seem to ride,—
Turn thine eye, and lift thine hand,
Pause, and bless thy native land.

"And now, dear sisters, friend, farewell!
Far distant scenes I must explore;
Yet ah! rude tempests, who can tell?
May wreck me on some ruthless shore,
To share with crowds the common lot,
Cast to the grave, and then forgot.

"Then ev'n affection's ties must sever;
And hope, on earth in mercy given,
Till we shall meet, and meet for ever,
And know all kindred souls in heaven.
O happy, happy, then my lot,
There I shall never be forgot. — S. G.

"Nun's Bridge, April 18. 1816."

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"Go then, go, — 'midst fears and dangers,
Thee no evil shall molest;
Go, — and in the land of strangers
Find affection, refuge, rest:
Yet for ever bear in mind
Loves and friendships left behind.

"Dearer, at this parting, dearer
Every hour we feel thee grow;
Nearer to our hearts, and nearer
Farther as thou seem'st to go;
From our weeping eyes removed,
Only to be more beloved.

"Go then, go, — our prayers attend thee
On thy weary pilgrimage;
Go then, go, and God befriend thee
Every step of every stage:
Blessed be His name, we say,
He who gave thee takes away.

"Yet in closer, holier union
He himself our souls shall keep,
While sublime and sweet communion
We shall hold across the deep,
Till we meet again, through grace,
Here, or in a better place.

"Fare thee well — but not for ever;
Yet for ever fare thee well!
Fare thee well; — and O wherever
Thou in earth or heaven shalt dwell,
Still believe my heart with thee,
Still in love remember me.

"August 1. 1816."

We have already intimated that the present year, like too many of those which preceded it, was marked with

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manifestations of political and social discontent. The war, which had been attended with so mighty a train of evils, was, indeed, closed; but the peace which had succeeded, instead of bringing, as was expected, plenty, and every other blessing along with it, seemed rather to be the concomitant, if not the cause, of severer trials —at least for the moment—than those from which the country had just been so providentially delivered. An almost universal stagnation in the channels of commerce was accompanied by an exorbitant rise in the price of provisions. These occurrences, together with the prospect of an unsatisfactory harvest, rendered the state of the nation truly alarming. Indeed, it was remarkable, as Montgomery observed, "that, amidst all these entailed miseries of the revolutionary conflict through which we, as well as every other people in Europe, are struggling —like the crew of a shipwrecked vessel just cast with their lives, and with nothing else, on shore,—to these should succeed a year of the most unpropitious influence on the seasons, and, consequently, on the produce of the earth, almost ever remembered."* For the existence of these evils various reasons were given by the ministers of the Crown; and still more numerous remedies were proposed by demagogues assuming the possession of "all the talents" necessary for so difficult a task, as well as by those who possessed no talent at all beyond that of being anxious to enlist the clamour of the starving poor in the service of demands for

* Iris, October 8. 1816. The article from which this passage is quoted, is an interesting "Essay on the Season," comprising the various paradoxical causes to which its ungenial state were attributed; with some amusing speculations on the state of things which would probably ensue, if the management of the weather was confided to the hands of those who so mismanage ordinary terrestrial affairs.

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immediate reform of Parliament, which, it was alleged, affected the question of present suffering. Montgomery thought otherwise; and, though an avowed advocate for *reform*, in the sober meaning of the term, declared that, in the present exigency, he did not perceive what valuable end could be answered to the "hundreds and thousands who were losing the appearance of human beings," by canvassing any abstract political proposition.

On the 9th of October, however, in pursuance of a requisition, a meeting was announced to be held in Sheffield, "to take into consideration the causes of the present distress." In the "Iris," published the day before the meeting, the editor recommended "manly candour and dignified moderation" to his townsmen. This wise and timely counsel was exceedingly offensive to some of the warmer partisans of "radical reform;" and its author received two letters the same evening, animadverting in no very gentle terms upon his conduct *, at the same time calling upon him to come forward and declare his sentiments at the meeting. He *did* attend the meeting, but not for the purpose suggested by his correspondent. Differing, as he did, from those who thought such a meeting advisable at such a crisis, he had also strong objections to some of the sentiments of the petition proposed, and still more so to the terms in which those sentiments were couched; and besides, however he might have felt disposed elsewhere to argue

* The drift of their censure may be perceived from the following sentence: — "But the cause of the poor is a poor cause; a cause in which Mr. Mont ——y has long since ceased to be an advocate, further than as respects their *souls*, and in that we have not a more bigoted advocate in the country, because it is much *cheaper* to feed *them* than *the other*."

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for some qualification of the expressions used on these points, he was but too well aware that such an assembly — ten thousand persons congregated in the open air amidst a shower of rain—would be but little disposed to grant him a dispassionate hearing, even if strength of lungs—for he did not lack moral courage—would have allowed him to make the experiment. "In a single instance, where the accuracy of an assertion could be determined by a reference to public documents, he did not shrink from publicly noticing a mistake; but to have controverted opinions peremptorily avowed, to have questioned summary statements of figures, and criticised expressions deliberately employed by men who well understood their import, would have been beating the wind, and writing in water . . . because *a public meeting cannot be a deliberative body in the practical meaning of that phrase.*"*

These reasons, however conclusive to candid minds, were far enough from satisfying many intemperate individuals, who continued to send various castigatory letters, some of which he published; and nearly all of them tending to prove the truth of a remark which he made on another occasion, viz. that "there is nothing in the world so easy as violence, and nothing so difficult as *moderation:* every fool can fall into a passion or down a precipice; but it requires all the presence of mind and self-command of wisdom to escape either, when the blood boils in the one case, and the brain begins to swim in the other."

Montgomery was at all times, in his mature life, an advocate for moderation; and that the exercise of this difficult virtue in the present case cost him something, may be inferred from the fact which he men-

* Iris, October 22. 1816.

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tioned to the writer of this paragraph; that in consequence of his inability to agree, either in conduct or opinion, with certain parties, he lost more of his popularity as a politician in the autumn of 1816 than during the preceding twenty years of his life.

James Montgomery to John Young.

"Sheffield, Sept. 24. 1816.

"My dear Friend,

". . . The last year has been to me a year of much trial and difficulty in many respects; for though my own private concerns have prospered, yet, from my connection with others, I find nearly all the property I have out of business so involved, that I can neither touch principal nor interest. This, of course, has been a cause of much vexation and more anxiety than it ought, as I have had occasion for remorse in thus hazarding it in one instance, and voluntarily giving it out of my power in another. Any suffering, of mind or body, I have long ago learnt is preferable to the anguish of a wounded conscience; and, while I can keep myself clear of this evil in secular affairs, I ought to bear any other affliction with patience, yea, with grateful resignation to the will of Him who is wiser, and better, and kinder than any earthly friend could be to me, and therefore to whom, and to whose disposal, I may with confidence entrust all that I have, and all that I am. This disposition I endeavour to cherish, and I find that, were all that I have risked lost, instead of being merely locked up, I should have still enough and to spare for my own necessities and personal comforts, and, consequently, am deeply a debtor to Divine Providence, which has cared so well for me, while others, on every hand, are falling into poverty and ruin . . . Politics I hate with so perfect a hatred — I have suffered so much in property, in feeling, and in character, from violence and illiberality in the outset of my career, that I meddle with them no more than I can help. And if I could dispose of my newspaper for its value, I should rejoice to be at peace from

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them, at least with my hands and my head, for ever. Meanwhile, however, I shall neither disguise my sentiments when it seems my duty to avow them, nor will I thrust them forward when I may conscientiously reserve them to myself. Remember me kindly to those of your family who showed me kindness at Taunton three years ago; and if you see Mr. Standert, tell him I often think of him, and feel my heart warm at the thought.

"I am sincerely your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. John Young, Taunton."

On the 30th of October Montgomery writes to his brother Ignatius,—

"Welcome indeed was the sight of your handwriting at last . . . I had previously heard of the death of our admirable friend Richard Reynolds, the glory of Bristol. I had also read the proceedings of the Commemoration Meeting as detailed in the 'Bristol Mirror,' which was sent me by a neighbour; but, though I had been awed and humbled with the contemplation of his transcendent virtues, which seemed to have canonised the man the moment he put off mortality, I was so far from entertaining any desire to celebrate his name in verse, that such a thought had not entered my mind, and when you intimated such a thing, I was almost displeased, and exceedingly reluctant to consider it. Nothing is so irksome to me as tasks in poetry, especially on those subjects when everybody expects you to write, and on which it is almost in vain to attempt to write, all the good thoughts having been long ago anticipated, and language itself exhausted to adorn them. Such are *charitable* subjects. This subject, unluckily, was of the nature of both, and therefore doubly repulsive at first. The idea, however, haunted me like the spirit of an unburied corpse, according to classical superstition; and to lay it with a spell of song was all that seemed left for me at last to escape its importunity with a quiet conscience. I

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therefore began; and, in the course of a few days, amidst many engagements of a very uninspiring character, completed two of the little pieces which have been announced, and had planned the third in my mind—for a *regular* elegy I was determined from the beginning not to write, nor any elegy at all, unless I could give some form of novelty to my meditations. This was my situation on Monday se'nnight, and I had not yet resolved to publish the lines otherwise than in the newspaper; but, seriously weighing all circumstances connected with it, towards evening I suddenly sat down and penned the advertisement, which I immediately sent to the press; thus irrevocably binding myself *what* to do — to do my *best*,—and to do it *quickly*. There was then no retreat. In the course of the week I finished my work, and sent the manuscript to my London booksellers to be printed very elegantly, that at least the appearance of my verses might be creditable to myself, and suitable to the subject. When I made up my mind to publish, I calculated upon the uncertainty of sale, but I ventured to give directions for a thousand copies, at my own risk, my booksellers acting merely as my agents. I hope I shall be able to dispose of the whole of these; and if so, there will be a gift for the Commemoration Society worthy of its acceptance, though, of course, not very large. I wish to be especially understood among my Bristol friends,—it is the *first edition only* that I consecrate to this incomparable charity, which I regard as the noblest monument to the living themselves, while they honour the dead, that ever was raised in my recollection."

Of poetical productions published in the course of the present year may be mentioned, "Verses to the Memory of the late Richard Reynolds, of Bristol;"* some playful lines intended as a "Sequel and Moral" to a rhyming narrative, entitled the "Four Friends,"

* Works, p. 254.

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published in a small volume * by Samuel Roberts, Esq.; to which may be added the "Time-Piece," which was written in Liverpool; and a few spirited stanzas, entitled, the "Christian Soldier."† The verses on Reynolds were advertised at two shillings, stitched, with an intimation that the edition would be proportioned to the probable number of subscribers, and that the profits, if any, would be given to the Institution founded in Bristol to commemorate the virtues of that benevolent individual whom the poet designated as "one of the people *called* Quakers, but one of the people who *are* Christians, not in word only, but in deed also."‡ The first edition of a thousand copies was published in November, and was exhausted before the end of the month, when it was followed by a second and third impression of five hundred each. The proceeds of the sale, to the amount of forty pounds, Montgomery transmitted, with the following letter,—

To the Committee of the Reynolds Commemoration Society at Bristol.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Having promised the clear products of an edition of 'Verses to the Memory of the late Richard Reynolds,' consisting of one thousand copies, to your most exemplary

* The "Blind Man and his Son, a Tale," &c., dedicated to Montgomery.

† The Rev. Thomas Taylor, a venerable Methodist preacher, who was found dead in bed, October 15. 1816, after having declared in his sermon on the preceding evening, that he "hoped to die as an old soldier of Jesus Christ, with his sword in his hand."—*Works*, p. 305.

‡ A volume of letters, with a memoir of this good man, was published in 1852, by his grand-daughter Hannah Mary Rathbone, of Liverpool, the author of the "Diary of Lady Willoughby," &c.

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Society, I enclose a bill, value 40*l.*, which you will please to accept on that account. After defraying all the expenses of printing and advertising in town and country, I have received, or expect to receive, when outstanding debts are paid, 38*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* as clear profits. I have made the sum an even one—40*l.* The advertisements, especially in London, were very heavy upon so small a publication; and the profits would have been less, if some friends, among whom, with particular regard, I must mention Dr. Pole, had not ordered their copies immediately of myself, and paid the full price for them. I also published this edition at my own expense and risk, and thereby secured as much gain from it as could be made under the circumstances of the case.

"As it would have been exceedingly inconvenient for me to have continued this plan of publication when the first edition was exhausted, I put the pamphlet into the hands of my booksellers, who undertook to publish whatever copies might be afterwards wanted on the same terms as they publish my other works; namely, that they take all the cost and hazard upon themselves, and allow me *half* the profits. On this scale, of course, those profits that may fall to me hereafter on so small a publication will be inconsiderable in comparison with those which accrued from the first edition. *These*, whatever they may be, I shall distribute to such charities as I think the spirit of our departed friend would have countenanced had he still been amongst us. I hope it will yet, yea for ever, be said of him, that as he did not live in vain, so he has not died in vain; but that his memory will be more blessed to the poor than his presence would have been had his age been prolonged to that of a patriarch. This ought ever to be the effect of virtuous example in its influence on worthy survivors. *One* may not be found to supply the place of R. Reynolds, but *all* may *much more* than supply it; and I would fain hold fast my confidence in the people of Bristol that they *will*.

"I am, with the sincerest respect, your friend and servant,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Sheffield, Feb. 12. 1817."

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The "Four Friends" originated under the following circumstances:—

It was for many years — hardly less than a quarter of a century — the practice of Montgomery, Rowland Hodgson, and George Bennet, Esqs., along with Mr. Roberts, above mentioned, to meet once a month at each other's houses in rotation, for the purpose of devising and promoting objects of benevolence. On one of these occasions they suffered the conversation of the evening so completely to absorb their attention, that the fire had nearly died out for want of fuel and stirring:—

"Thus H——, the meekest man you see,
And M——, who would not hurt a flea,
And R——, to all men's failings blind,
And B——, the kindest of his kind*,
Sat round the black and smouldering grate,
In skirmishes of keen debate."

As the fresh fuel did not appear to burn cheerfully or readily, an opinion was expressed that it had been unskilfully applied; and each guest in turn, must, forsooth, needs try his hand to mend the arrangement. The consequence was, that the successive attempts of the four gentlemen amateurs in this nice affair of domestic science only terminated in clearing the grate of both fire and coals, and leaving the extinguished mass in the fender! Among the recriminatory sallies to which this piece of bad *pokership* gave rise, the subject was proposed for a fable. Mr. Roberts accordingly related

* The frontispiece of the second volume of these Memoirs is copied from a picture of the "Four Friends," belonging to the family of the late Samuel Roberts, Esq., of Park Grange, Sheffield. The outline is, in each case, very characteristic of the individual represented.

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the leading details of the transaction in rhyme; and then sent the essay to Montgomery, who supplied a moral, of which this is the point:—

> "Ergo, — the hardest thing to man,
> Is — to do *only* what he can."

The "Iris" which appeared on the 31st of December — the last day of the year — contained an Essay on Last Days, written with the Editor's characteristic feelings, and another article which took most persons by surprise — it was the announcement of a partnership entered into between James Montgomery and Mathewman Smith, who had been his apprentice, and "in whose experience, ability, and attention to the duties of so responsible a situation he placed the fullest reliance." This expression of confidence in the merits of his coadjutor, was, however, accompanied with an intimation to the public, that "the editorship of the 'Iris' would remain in the same hands as heretofore;" and also with an assurance "that the independence of character which this journal has ever maintained, through evil report and good report, shall never be forfeited, whatever other changes may take place in his [Montgomery's] years, in his person, or in his circumstances, so long as he has the fear of God before his eyes, and the love of his country in his heart."

The individual who, in this instance, was admitted into such intimate connection with the poet, and at the same time placed in a position so entirely adapted for success on the part of a prudent and industrious young man, was Mathewman, the eldest son of the late Rev. George Smith, perpetual curate of Ecclesall, near Sheffield. The youth had been originally placed in the "Iris" office with reference to this arrange-

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ment: nor had his minority been marked by any circumstance that distinctly foreshadowed a painful issue: at all events, misgivings were as little likely to be urged as accepted in lieu of those implied as well as stipulated obligations which were to be regarded by the parties as mutually binding. The partnership terminated — as we shall presently notice — the next year but one; and, as will readily be imagined, not without grief, disappointment, and loss on the part of Montgomery. This fact, in the retrospect, gives a particular interest to the following reflections in the essay above mentioned, and which appeared in the same column with the announcement of the partnership: "When we set an acorn we expect that it will produce an oak; when we plant a vine we calculate on gathering grapes; but when we lay a plan for years to come, we may *wish*, and we can do nothing more, except *pray* that it may be accomplished; for we know not what the morrow may bring forth: all that we *do* know beforehand of *any* thing is, that to everything beneath the sun there comes a last day!"

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CHAP. XLIV.

1817.

PARTNERSHIP IN THE "IRIS."—STATE LOTTERIES.—"ODE TO BRITAIN." —LOTTERY ADVERTISEMENTS REFUSED. — CHIMNEY SWEEPERS. — BOYS AND MACHINERY. — MISSIONARY MEETING. — ORGAN OF COMBATIVENESS.—EVERETT'S "EDWIN."—"INCOGNITA." — EPITAPHS. — DEATH OF PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.—MONTGOMERY A SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER. — RED HILL SCHOOLS — RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND PRAYER.—EVANGELICAL CLERGY IN SHEFFIELD.—LETTER TO ASTON. —CHRISTMAS HYMN.

THE first number of the "Iris" which appeared this year bore the names of the joint proprietors, and also contained an address reiterating the intended continuance of the old editorship in the advocacy of unchanged principles. "Engaged in an enterprise honourable but hazardous," the proprietors say "they are determined, to the best of their knowledge and ability, *to do their duty;* if they *succeed,* WELL—if they fail, they have *done* their duty; millions succeed with doing less—who can do more?"

At this period public attention was strongly directed to the principles and operations of State lotteries; the policy as well as the morality of these sources of revenue, once repudiated by Junius, being now seriously questioned in various quarters. Among the decided opponents of the system was Montgomery himself; and he did not scruple to avow a deliberate conviction,

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from experience, as well as reflection, that various and great evils were necessarily inherent in this gigantic scheme of national gambling. Besides other publications, tending to explain and expose this "mystery of iniquity," a volume entitled the "State Lottery, a Dream," by Samuel Roberts; including "Thoughts on Wheels, a Poem in five Parts," by James Montgomery, appeared in the month of January. The rhyming diatribe thus ushered into notice, notwithstanding some passages of a striking character, and many just sentiments, was not calculated to add much to the poetical reputation of the author; and the public allowed it to appear and disappear without curiosity.

Everett: "The 'State Lottery,' sir, is like a millstone on the neck of your poem." *Montgomery:* "My Wheels do indeed drag rather heavily under the weight of my friend's vision." *Everett:* "I wonder you did not reprint them along with the 'Ode to Britain.'" *Montgomery*—in a tone of pleasantry:—"I leave them to my literary executor." *Holland:* "Then, sir, should I ever become your biographer, may I consider the 'Thoughts on Wheels' as my property?" *Montgomery:* "You are quite welcome to them; and Mr. Everett is witness to the donation."*

The "Ode to Britain," is alike characteristic of the genius and creditable to the heart of the poet; and, from the nature of the subject, presently found its way to every part of the world where British subjects

* Montgomery was little aware at the moment these remarks were made, of their relative importance as connected with the events of after years. The "Ode to Britain" was included in the first edition of the author's collected poems, 1836.

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were ready to hail the remembrance of their native land in the sweetest tones of their mother-tongue. *Montgomery:* "Do you know the Rev. William Newstead, of Ceylon?" *Everett:* "Not personally; he is a Methodist missionary there." *Montgomery:* "I received a letter from him the other day, enclosing some pieces in rhyme; one of them written on reading my 'Ode to Britain,' which had, it seems, found its way into the Government 'Gazette:' it appears to have warmed all the English blood the good man has in his veins." *Everett:* "And here is a letter from another missionary at Tortola, containing an order for your works; so that you see, while you are so fondly remembered in the East, you are not forgotten in the West." In this "Ode," the poet, after having indulged in the most enthusiastic aspirations of patriotism, thus alludes to the State lottery: —

> "O Britain! O my country! bring
> Forth from thy camp th' accursed thing;
> Consign it to remorseless fire,
> Watch till the latest spark expire;
> Then cast the ashes on the wind,
> Nor leave one atom-wreck behind."

Up to this period, the "Iris," in common with other newspapers, had been the vehicle of lottery advertisements and puffs, which were the earliest exemplars, there and elsewhere, of those preposterous freaks of typographical display which have grown into such monster-forms of late years. But having now borne his public and decided testimony as a man and a Christian against lotteries, Montgomery no longer felt at liberty to derive advantage from the repudiated system, in the way of business: accordingly, he not only declined every com-

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mission from the London offices, but resolved, thenceforth, not to admit a lottery advertisement into his paper. After some remarks relative to the insight which, during the period of his own agency, he acquired in the matter of "risks and returns," the poet adds: —

"I was never for a moment tempted to hazard a shilling on a turn of the wheel for myself. On one occasion only, when the drawing was to be closed on an early day, and I had to send back to my principals the unsold shares in my hands, I retained two-eighths, in expectation of having calls for them before the last drawing. One was sold, the other remained with me; but proving a small prize, I escaped comparatively unscathed." *

Had he continued to derive emolument from even a business transaction the coincident immorality of which he had so strongly reprobated in his verse, his conscientiousness might well have been impugned, whatever had been thought of his reasoning; but, to use his own words, — "When a man voluntarily sacrifices his interest, he gives a fair pledge of the sincerity of his motives in reprobating a measure from which he was wont to derive profit." When the subject came before Parliament, Mr. Lyttleton † made a direct allusion to the conduct of Montgomery, in the House

* Prefatory note to "Thoughts on Wheels." One of the most interesting chapters of Mr. Francis's "Chronicles and Characters of the Stock Exchange," is that devoted to the subject of Lotteries. See also Hone's "Every Day Book," vol. ii. pp. 1405. 1536.

† Afterwards Lord Lyttleton; with him, and other members of the House of Commons who held the same sentiments as Montgomery, and Mr. Roberts, the Sheffield poet had frequent correspondence; nor does he hesitate to claim for himself and his friend the credit of having directly, "by strenuous perseverance in advocating a good cause, contributed something (however little it may have been) towards the removal of the greatest plague that

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of Commons: at the same time, and in consequence of the honourable gentleman's motion, the trustees of that venerable and magnificent charity, Christ's Hospital, unanimously resolved to abolish the degrading and vitiating custom of allowing the blue-coat boys to draw the tickets from the wheel. In this result Montgomery sincerely rejoiced, observing afterwards, that, "among the improper occupations in which children in this country are too often and too early engaged, none are more reprehensible than climbing chimneys — except drawing the tickets of the State lottery."*

Of that degraded and suffering class of children just alluded to, — the chimney-sweepers, — Montgomery was ever the friend and advocate. For ten years preceding this period, the columns of the "Iris," whenever opportunity offered, had not only exhibited their wrongs in the liveliest as well as the deepest colours which the editor could mingle, but they had been constantly open to other persons who might be disposed to plead a cause which, on many accounts, was not popular. Sheffield, indeed, among the large towns in the king-

ever infested the country in the shape of a tax upon the poverty, the morals, and the happiness of the people." — Preface to "Thoughts on Wheels," *Works*, p. 154.

* In three lotteries, drawn during the year in which Montgomery gave up his agency, he sold 682 shares, *but not one whole ticket;* and we have heard him say that after selling numbers which entitled the holders to participate in a prize of 20,000*l.* some years earlier, his sale rose to 500*l.* per annum. The ultimate abolition, by Act of Parliament, of "that opprobrium of the nation — that mother-vice, the lottery," as Coleridge calls it (*Friend*, vol. i. p. 92.), is one of the few memorable instances of legislation directly for a moral end, which history exhibits. Some curious observations on the fact of a minister of the Gospel having drawn a blank in the State lottery will be found in the "Letters of the Rev. Dr. Doddridge," vol. ii. pp. 185, 186.

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dom, had been foremost to seek the abolition of this cruel and degrading practice*: and in the month of April, this year, a meeting, in which Montgomery took an active part, was held for the purpose of adopting a petition to the legislature, in behalf of the poor climbing boys. On this occasion, he contended that there did not exist any necessity for such a practice — a practice decidedly inhuman, let scorn and apathy say what they would. "Yet," continued he,

"If chimneys *must* be swept, and if they *can only* be swept by friction of the bones and muscles of infants, are the feelings of an exquisitely sensitive frame necessary to this coarse operation? Does it require the energies of an intellectual, an immortal spirit *within* the living machine to dislodge a little soot from the hollow of a vile funnel? No, certainly; and the practice would be infinitely improved by employing the bodies of dead children in the process, to be worked up and down the chimney, with a rope, like the bundle of straw in the old method, by a man at the top, and another at the bottom, like a pair of sawers!"

This idea, he added, was suggested with deliberation, because it would fill every mind with unutterable horror, and be what the master-chimney-sweepers would, to a man, abjure, and think probably no two wretches in the

* The children employed in this disgusting work in Paris, are said to be taken mostly from the rural districts, instead of from the lowest classes in the large towns, as in England. Like our own sweeps, they had a melancholy "cry," though not like *that* silenced by Act of Parliament; and it may be within the memory of some ancient frequenters of the theatre in the metropolis, that—

"Ramoner-ci, ramoner-là,
La cheminée de haut en bas"—

formed part of a once popular song by a popular young actress.—Boaden's *Mem. Siddons*, vol. i. p. 125.

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king's dominions could be bribed to put in practice; and yet, in almost every house in the kingdom, *the bodies of living infants* were used for the very same purpose! In Sheffield, indeed, owing to the vigilance, co-operation, and perseverance of several benevolent individuals, the situation of the children employed to sweep chimneys had been rendered considerably less wretched than it was in other towns: once a year, the lads all appeared clean and decent at a dinner given to them by their friends; and from which meal no invitation to partake of more sumptuous fare, or to join in the pleasures of more dignified society, could have induced Montgomery to have absented himself. We may here mention that a little poem, entitled the "Chimney Sweeper's Boy," and written by Mr. Roberts, has frequently been attributed to our poet.

Montgomery wrote, and at the public meeting on the 27th of May read, the "Third Report of the Methodist Missionary Auxiliary of the Sheffield District." The key-note and the first paragraph of this composition were as follows: —

"'*The world by wisdom knew not God.*' This humiliating Scripture-truth is attested by every record of profane history. The volume of Nature is unintelligible without the commentary of Revelation. The magnificent page of heaven, inscribed with suns and stars, — the humble but more diversified pages of earth, written within and without with characters innumerable and inexpressibly significant, from the flower of the field to the forest of ages, from the pearl in the shell and the diamonds in the mine to the mountains that hide their heads in the clouds, and the ocean that engirdles the globe, from the worm of the dust to man himself, — these, to the eye that cannot read the language in which the heavens declare the glory of God, nor see the earth filled with his goodness, present only a

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dumb spectacle of beauty and splendour above — and beneath, an infinite mass of hieroglyphics, as undecipherable as those on the obelisks and temples of Egypt. Indeed, these are truly what the hieroglyphics were pretended to be — the symbols of a sacred language, which none but the initiated in the mysteries of the religion which they betoken can ever understand. It was the pride and the craft of the priests of the Nile to keep their secrets for ever concealed from the reprobate vulgar, but it is the duty and the delight of Christian priests to declare, to all that will hear them, the mysteries of godliness, hidden from the foundation of the world from millions and millions of the fallen race of Adam."

Multiplied as have been our quotations in evidence of Montgomery's hatred of war, both in practice and principle, the following passage irresistibly invites transcription: —

"It is in vain to say, that man is by nature a fighting animal. Man is many things by nature, which it is not fit he should continue in society. An infant learns without teaching to fight its mother, and the first exercise of its military talents are against the breast from which it draws its nutriment; from thence it proceeds to commit hostilities on its father's hands, extended to caress it, and hesitates on no convenient opportunity to lay waste with its nails — the weapons which nature has given it — the faces of its brothers and sisters. But are these propensities to be indulged and encouraged because they are instinctive; or are they not to be restrained, lest a Nelson or a Wellington should be spoiled in the cradle? Verily, if Gall and Spurzheim's system of craniology be true, and there be found on the surface of the infant pericranium an organ of belligerency, it would be the first duty of the mother to depress it even to obliteration, or, if it were not otherwise to be subdued, to have it trepanned and removed altogether, that the pacific organs adjacent might be proportionately enlarged, as the

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sensibility of the ear is quickened by the loss of sight, or the intelligence of the eye by the loss of hearing. As for adults, if *they* have got such a thing in their head, it would not be easy either to squeeze or to bore it out; and if hands and edge-tools could not accomplish the desirable erasure, how hopeless were arguments directed against a skull so inveterately modified; indeed, they would be about as well applied *externally* to the sconce, as *internally* to the brain; and we might in some cases sooner expect to reason down the protuberance than to reason out the notion."*

August 7. — Mr. Everett had placed in Montgomery's hands the manuscript of a portion of a poem entitled "Edwin," and written in the measure of the "Wanderer of Switzerland." *Montgomery:* "I think you have missed your way; Edwin is not generally known in English history; or, at all events, not sufficiently distinguished to interest the reader; so that you have to create an interest in the hero, as well as in the story you have to tell of him." *Everett:* "He has perhaps attracted my attention the more strongly as being a Northumbrian; but I think there are several points in his life, of scenery in his kingdom, and of interest in his age, which are very susceptible of poetic treatment; — his state as a heathen prince; his conviction and conversion through the preaching of Paulinus; his baptism in the Swale; his heroic desecration of the idol temple; the influence of his Christianity on those about him, and the scenery at and around Auldly, the royal Saxon residence on the banks of the Derwent, near York; — all these appear to be appropriate materials for such a work as mine." *Montgomery:* "But, at any rate, you should not have adopted the short metre of my poem: it succeeded once, owing to the accidental

* Iris, Sept. 23. 1817.

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popularity of the subject, and the novelty of the manner; but it ought hardly to be imitated, especially in so long a poem as yours promises to be." *Everett:* "I intend in the different books or parts to adopt various measures, as best suited to the subjects of each." *Montgomery:* "Well, then, don't be discouraged; but go on, always doing your best. Your principal defect is obscurity — the use of lines in which the meaning is imperfectly expressed: you have command both of language and imagery; use both so as to render the subject treated, plain to the reader. Attend to, 1. Perspicuity of thought. 2. Simplicity of language." The MS., when returned, had the margins covered with useful hints and annotations, pencilled thereon according to the poet's custom in such cases; and they were not few.

In September Montgomery spent some time at the well-known watering-place, Leamington, in Warwickshire, with his friend Rowland Hodgson; and it was while here that the poet wrote those exquisite and well-known stanzas, entitled "Incognita." His companion had so often seen him sit gazing, as if in deep thought, upon the picture of an "unknown lady" which hung in their sitting-room, that he said to him, on one occasion, "I think, Montgomery, you seem to have fallen in love with that portrait; I will try to purchase it for you." This promise was, as we shall afterwards find, unexpectedly realised. After a month's sojourn at Leamington, the poet proceeded to Bristol*, where the "Incognita" was finished. We have heard

* While at Bristol he received a letter from his friend Mr. Roberts, earnestly recommending to him "The Bible" as "the subject of an epic poem;" his correspondent not only thus suggesting a theme, but indicating what, in his opinion, would be an appropriate line of action and illustration. "I have only room,"

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him mention, that having transcribed the stanzas at his brother's house in that city, he started with them to the post-office, enclosed in a letter for Sheffield. After traversing several streets, he discovered that, in his haste, he had only put on a single black gaiter, the other ancle exhibiting a clean white stocking! In this *mi-parti* guise he had to walk about a mile. It was at a certain spot on the Warwick road, where, standing to gaze on the clear blue sky, he composed that often-quoted verse—one of the most beautiful in the language, and which Moore once said he repeated every day of his life *—

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says Mr. Roberts, in conclusion, "for hints as to what *has been*, and what *is*: for what is *to come*, 'when the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord,' you must apply to two sources, which to *you* will pour out rivers of living waters—Scripture and imagination. Whether you seek fame, profit, or usefulness, this subject promises to afford it most abundantly. No other is so universally popular, or so inestimably valuable; no other is so unoccupied; for no other are *you* so well qualified; for *this* no other poet is so capable as *you* are. It must be done; and you must (if God permit) do it!" Of Montgomery's reply we have no trace; nor any fragment in evidence that he himself ever meditated such a subject in verse, beyond three stanzas on "The Bible" written in 1815.[a]

* Moore thus alludes to the lines in his "Diary:"—"1819, July 18. Dined at Bowood [Marquis of Lansdowne's]. Company: the Hollands and Morpeths, Lord J. Russell, &c. I mentioned, before dinner, to Lord Holland, two passages that had struck me in looking over a new publication of Montgomery's that morning. The first was—

"'The dead are like the stars by day,
Withdrawn from mortal eye,
But not extinct—they hold their way
In glory through the sky.'

Lord H. did not much like them. In the first place, he said,

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[a] Works, p. 304.

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"The dead are like the stars by day," &c.*

The eleventh stanza originally stood as follows,—the reader may compare it with the final version : —

'they begged the question;' but surely poets are privileged to be even bold beggars in this way. In the next place, he said, 'the stars reappeared continually, which the dead did not:' but the poet only compares the dead to stars 'by day;' and it is too hard upon similes to travel out of the record thus in search of things in which the objects compared are *not* like. The other passage [from "Greenland," canto v.] describes a setting of the sun behind a hill :

"'—— And in his own blue element expires :
Thus Aaron laid his gorgeous robes aside
On Horeb's consecrated mount, and died!'

This he was more tolerant about."[a] Most readers of taste will, we apprehend, concur in the reclamation of the poet against the criticism of the peer.

Appended to a copy of Moore's well-known song, "The World is all a fleeting Show," &c., once so popular, and cited by Lord John Russell as exemplifying the general tone of the poet's feelings, we find the following fragmentary comment by Montgomery : —

"O world, the worldling cannot know
Thy splendour and thy worth;
Thou art not 'all a fleeting show,'
There's yet a joy on earth :

"Thy glory is the flower of grass,
Thy beauty morning dew ;
The sparkle or the bloom may pass,
'Tis fleeting, — yet 'tis true."

* Ralph Thoresby records an old epitaph containing a somewhat similar idea : —

"The night is past, the stars remain,
So man that dies shall live again."
Ducatus Leodiensis.

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[a] Memoirs of Moore, vol. ii. p. 342.

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"Of her, of whom this glimpse alone
A faint resemblance gives;
Of her,—(the artist's name unknown,
By whom her memory lives,)—
This effigy to dust to turn,
Moth may devour it, fire may burn;
And she—her very shade unseen—
Shall be as if she ne'er had been."

At the earnest request of a friend of the deceased, Montgomery wrote the following lines, which may be seen on the grave-stone of George Foster, in St. Paul' Churchyard, Sheffield:—

"Seek not the living with the dead;
The dust is here, the spirit fled;
When those who sleep in death shall rise,
Amidst the wreck of earth and skies,
O may this dust—that spirit—meet
With joy before the judgment seat."

He likewise composed the metrical part of an inscription on a tablet erected in Ebenezer Chapel, Birmingham, in memory of the Rev. Jehoiada Brewer, who died August 24. 1817, having himself laid the corner-stone of that place of worship in the previous year:—

"O! that engraven on this silent stone,
The message from eternity were shown,
Which he, whose spirit seems to sojourn here,
Would bring, might he on earth again appear.
What is it? This the Preacher's text would be—
The Saviour's brief command of 'Follow me,'
And this his sermon—'Hear, Believe, Obey;
Work while thou may'st—with thee 'tis yet to-day.'"

Mr. Brewer had formerly been the minister of one of

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the Independent chapels in Sheffield; and previously to his removal to Birmingham, in 1796, Montgomery had occasionally heard him preach, in company with his friend the Rev. (afterwards Dr.) John Pye Smith. The epitaph was composed at the request of the Rev. Timothy East, after the poet had declined to yield to the solicitation of Mrs. Brewer to write a memoir of her husband.

On the 6th of November died the Princess Charlotte of Wales, after giving birth to a still-born male infant. The intelligence of this lamentable event was communicated through all ranks of society with a suddenness and a shock resembling an electrical discharge. In almost every house might literally be heard sounds of "mourning, lamentation, and woe" for the royal daughter of England, the "desire" of her husband's and of the people's eyes, who had been "taken away" by a most unexpected stroke. Indeed, so universally and powerfully did the news of this calamity vibrate through the heart of the body politic, that the distressing contemporaneous excitement of treasons, state trials, and executions was absorbed for a time in the paramount importance and bewildering effect of this national bereavement. Pens, which had just before been engaged in giving vent to the most violent and conflicting political sentiments, were suddenly cleansed from the feculence of party rage, and those who wielded them became unanimous in their recognition of the virtues, and united in their lamentations on the death of the departed princess. On this pathetic subject the whole soul of Montgomery seemed to be drawn forth in sympathy with those who mourned; and for several weeks in succession the "Iris" exhibited articles embodying the reflections

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and feelings of his exquisitely organised mind on this affecting subject.*

Poetry, as might be expected, promptly responded to the calls of pity on this fitting occasion; and perhaps there was hardly a pen which had been wont to be used for rhyme, but was now exercised in eulogising, lamenting, or in some way commemorating the late queen-apparent. Among those who shed "melodious tears" on this occasion, was Montgomery himself; and perhaps — next to Byron's famous episode — his verses "On the Royal Infant," are among the few out of the thousands of those rhyming memorials now remembered.† Many persons, to whom the spirit and the letter of the writings of the poet have long been more or less familiar, are now probably to be told, for the first time, that James Montgomery was at this period

* We were much surprised, on the appearance of "Prose by a Poet," not to find any of these papers reproduced in that work. On mentioning the matter to the author, he said, "They might have been thought by some persons, at that time, too political; but if I should live a hundred years longer, I may perhaps *then* republish them in some future volume of that work!"

† Adverting to this subject six months afterwards, when "eloquence and poetry, music and painting, had exhausted their powers, without exhausting their theme," Montgomery's opinion was that "poetry had failed more egregiously than either of her sisters aforenamed;" a poem in blank verse, by the Rev. R. Kennedy, of Birmingham, appearing to him "incomparably the best" which was published on the occasion. At the same time he quoted the famous "Lament" from the fourth canto of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," with the remark that "harsh, stern, and unbending as are the tones and cadences of these stanzas, they are of force to hold in willing captivity the mind most repugnant to that of the noble and inimitable author, who seems to utter not song but oracles, and to speak *non verba sed tonitrua* — not words but thunders."

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a Sunday-school teacher. This employment, we are aware, will be regarded by certain parties as adding neither to the embellishment nor to the dignity even of his Christian character. He however, thought otherwise; or rather, entertained no anxious thoughts on the subject, beyond those which immediately prompted the discharge of what he conscientiously recognised as a duty; and when the hundreds of individuals who once listened to, and long afterwards recollected his expressions as a teacher with delight shall be no more, these pages must bear record that the hours which the pious poet spent in the religious instruction of poor children on the Sabbath, were often publicly referred to by him as among the happiest and most usefully employed hours of his life.

It was in the course of this year that Montgomery attended a meeting of the friends and teachers of the Red Hill Sunday School, in Sheffield, on which occasion a female, upwards of sixty years of age, and who had recently commenced her education by learning the alphabet in the school, read, for the satisfaction and gratification of the assembly, a chapter from the New Testament. Standing near the spectacled old woman, he took up the candle, and held it in his hand for her convenience, during the reading. When she had finished, he began his speech by saying that "it had been his lot, at various periods, to be exposed to the effects of malicious slander and detraction, and to the still more dangerous temptations of praise and flattery; but never, during his whole life, had he felt himself so deeply humbled, or so honourably exalted, as during the time he had held the light for, and listened to the voice of his venerable sister. She had read the words of eternal life, which were able to

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make her — as well as every one else who heard them — wise unto salvation: and he felt, in his own heart, that had he never heard, or should he never hear another sermon, besides that to which he had just listened, he should, were he to neglect the Gospel salvation, be left without excuse in the great day of final account." After having argued very cogently on the importance of religious instruction, and enforced it as the duty of every person having leisure and ability to aid in communicating it to those who would otherwise remain in ignorance, he added that those who heard him thus speak, in that place, might very naturally ask, "why *he* did not become a Sunday-school teacher?" He had no doubt, he said, but he could adduce reasons which would satisfy *them*, if not as to the impracticability, at least of the inconvenience of such a step; but he must honestly confess that those reasons did not so fully satisfy *himself*. Advantage was, of course, taken of this remark, and he was respectfully requested to accept the office of what was termed a *religious instructor* in the school; that is, instead of the tiresome routine of hearing a class of children read and spell, his duty would be to withdraw a score of the boys or girls into a closet, and there address them, and pray with them, faithfully and affectionately. To this proposal he made no objection, except on account of the precarious state of his health, which, he alleged, might interfere with the regularity of his attendance. He was, however, associated with colleagues in this humble but useful duty, who left the rendering of any service to his own convenience. Long and zealously did he fulfil these Sabbath-morning engagements; and hundreds of children, at that time occupying seats in the Red Hill Schools, and who have

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since formed a part of the current generation of men and women in Sheffield and elsewhere, can well recollect, and many of them do with gratitude recall, the hours when they enjoyed the privilege of Montgomery's personal instructions.

The institution to which he was induced thus to attach himself, contained upwards of a thousand children of both sexes on its books; its founders and conductors were mostly Wesleyan Methodists. The duty devolving upon the poet was, as we have said, to withdraw about twenty of the scholars into a small room, and there privately catechise, exhort, and pray with them. We have been present on some of these occasions; and it was, as may be imagined, at once an interesting and an affecting sight to witness this good man "shut in from the world," as he used to say, "by that roof, and these four walls, with no eye but the eye of God, and the eyes of you my dear children, and of your teachers, upon us," kneeling amidst a little group of poor boys and girls, after having explained a passage of Scripture, or enforced some moral duty, and breathing out his soul in prayer with a degree of fervour, simplicity, and sweetness, which those who heard him can neither forget nor describe: he sometimes, indeed, appeared in these moments of gracious "converse with the Deity," in an emphatic sense, of the fine expression of the poet of Laura,

"E nude spirto poca polve,"

pure spirit and a little dust! These sentiments, we are aware, will be considered important or fanciful, according to their agreement or otherwise with the views of different classes of readers: we have expressed them with deliberation; and the meaning which we are anxious to convey, can only be wholly mistaken by those who

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are themselves neither in the habit of exercising nor of enjoying spiritual sympathy with those who exercise similar gifts.

We lay the more stress on this subject, because many who lack neither intelligence nor piety in the general acceptation of the terms, appear to entertain a notion that the possession of a refined taste, and especially the exercise of a cultivated poetic fancy, are incompatible with those *details of duty and devotion* which are often so strikingly carried out by minds of an inferior class. There is something in the "pomp and circumstance" of public worship, when the great congregation assembles in the "solemn temple," whether the service there be gorgeous or simple, which often reconciles even a non-religious man to the endurance of a Sabbath ceremony of formal attendance, which it is decent to observe, and disreputable to neglect: but it is another and quite a different thing for a distinguished individual to "take up his cross," by engaging in duties and mixing with persons calculated to lessen him in his own eyes and in the sight of many of his more respectable fellow-creatures. Montgomery was not only "clothed with humility," but he was peculiarly "a man of prayer:" in this exercise he never refused to engage when solicited by his Christian brethren, thus giving one of the best proofs of the genuineness of his conversion — the spiritual "change of heart" which he had experienced. Thus much it seems proper to say in this place, as equally due to a sacred regard for historical truth, and as a just indication of the religious character of our revered friend.

Montgomery's influence in the town where he resided was greatly increased about this period by a rare concurrence of unforeseen circumstances. The vicar of

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the parish, now in the prime of life, had experienced a religious change, affecting his sentiments and conduct, not less remarkable than that of which our poet had himself become the subject: and four of the local clergy, respectable men of the old school, having died about this time, their important spheres of ministerial usefulness were opened to incumbents of decidedly evangelical character, all of whom cultivated the friendship and claimed the coöperation of Montgomery, in common with the Independents and the Methodists; hence arose a system of local harmony and good feeling, of which he was the unsectarian centre. Thus it happened that for some time Sheffield presented the phenomenon of its clergy and laity manifesting collectively greater concern for the prevalence of that religion which is "pure and undefiled," in the church and in the world, than individual solicitude for the success of their own sects respectively, — though *that* success was never more apparent and gratifying.

Four years having elapsed since Montgomery wrote to Aston, the complaints of the latter elicited a letter from his friend under the date of December 18th. It is written on one of the prospectuses of Rhodes's "Peak Scenery," and contains information to the effect that the writer had experienced "severe adversity in circumstances, and in the calamitous visitation of the times on all who had and who had not property. I have had," says he, "my share, not a ruinous one, but a very bereaving one, of loss and embarrassment." After speaking generally of the demands upon his time, he remarks: —

"I cannot pretend to enter into any details of these; but you may judge how I have been taxed and tethered, when I tell you, that I have found so little opportunity of

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exercising the natural and cherished propensities of my mind during four years past (since the publication of the 'World before the Flood'), that it was not till last autumn I could begin a new poem of any length. This I have now in progress, and it occupies all my thoughts, when other distracting cares and anxieties of business and of duty will allow me to indulge my vein."

The "Iris" of December 30th contained the "Hymn for Christmas," beginning —

"While War on earth suspended
His mad career of woes,
The Prince of Life descended,
A deadlier strife to close." *

* Original Hymns, LIX.

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CHAP. XLV.

1818.

BEAUTIFUL SIMILE. — APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE POOR GREENLANDERS. — LETTER FROM SOUTHEY. — ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR GREENLAND. — LETTER TO REV. T. GRINFIELD. — MISCONDUCT OF MONTGOMERY'S PARTNER. — MR. RAY ENGAGED AS FOREMAN. — IMPROVED APPEARANCE OF THE "IRIS." — CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY. — DEATH OF MR. BRACKENBURY. — EPITAPH. — THE "LITTLE CLOUD." — VISITS TO COUNTRY SUNDAY-SCHOOLS. — LETTER TO DR. RAFFLES. — GAS, POLICE, AND SAVINGS' BANK. — MONTGOMERY ON SANATORY IMPROVEMENTS.

How beautiful, poetical, and appropriate is the following simile with which the editor of the "Iris" hailed the opening of a year which was destined to be one of peculiar harassment to him! —

"When a child is suddenly transferred from the arms of one person to another, by a natural and beautiful instinct it turns its head and looks at the first with an eye of inquisitive anxiety, as if it doubted whether the change were for the better. In like manner, when we, as involuntarily as the infant, though not so unexpectedly, are passed from an old year into a new one, we are much more disposed to look behind than before us; to that which we are leaving, than to that which we are approaching; till the solicitude of something like regret is settled into the composure of resignation or indifference."

An opportunity was afforded to Montgomery this

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spring of receiving a gratifying practical proof of the estimation in which his character was held by the religious public. On the 31st of March he inserted in the "Iris" a long and affecting statement of the circumstances of destitution in which the poor inhabitants of Greenland were then placed, especially such of them as were connected with the Moravian missionary establishments in those dreary regions verging on the North Pole; at the same time soliciting on their behalf such contributions, in money or otherwise, as his readers, after a perusal of the narrative, might feel inclined to give. As there was no Moravian congregation in the town of Sheffield, nor any member of that fraternity residing there but himself, the merits of this cause, and the chances of its success, rested almost entirely on the credit of his individual character, as understood and appreciated by his readers.

In the paper of the following week, various donations, amounting altogether to 30*l.*, were gratefully acknowledged, with the remark that "this sum, small as it may appear in comparison with the tens of thousands raised on other occasions, is probably more than was ever done for Greenland before by all the people of Christendom, — the poor missionaries excepted, who for near a century have been spending their strength and sacrificing their lives for the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of the perishing inhabitants." Then followed one of those elegant similes which so frequently occurred in these newspaper articles: —

"The wild Arab in the desert, sitting down to his meal of black bread and salt, nevertheless gives God thanks; and before he begins, calls aloud to any hungry wretch that

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may be within hearing to come and partake with him. In Britain, where thousands sit down every day at plentiful tables, so far as his voice may be heard through the circuit of this paper, the present advocate of Greenland widows and orphans would remind the truly charitable of the words of their Redeemer, when He had counselled those who made feasts to 'call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind;' —'*they* cannot recompense thee, but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.'"

It was announced in the ensuing week that fresh contributions had increased the sum to 66*l.* 18*s.*, besides the welcome present of *ten thousand large needles* *, an article which it had been stated would be peculiarly useful.

Robert Southey to James Montgomery.

"Keswick, April 2. 1818.

"My dear Montgomery,

"Thank you for the 'Iris.' I enclose a one pound bill (more according to my means than my will) for the poor Greenlanders, and I will endeavour to do them better service by sketching — if I am permitted — a history of the Mission in the 'Quarterly Review.' I have Egede and Crantz at hand, and will write for the periodical accounts. I have frequent cause to regret that the first volumes of these most interesting records are not to be procured.

"Thank you also for your little publication on the death of Reynolds. I believe he did not become a resident at Bristol till after I had left that city: but I have seen his daughter (so, at least, I suppose her to be) Mrs. Rathbone; and she perhaps owes something of her sweetness of character to inheritance; for assuredly we bring with us predispositions, good and evil, which the followers of John Locke and John

* Presented by Messrs. Cocker, of Hathersage, Derbyshire.

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Calvin would find it difficult to reconcile with their respective systems.

"It is very long since I have written to you; forgive me, and tell me so, soon. I am closely employed; and, as usual, upon many things: the chief of them is the concluding volume of Brazil, a work of great ardour and corresponding delight to myself in its progress. This volume will contain much matter respecting the Jesuits, which is little, if at all, known to the English public; and accounts of savage life more curious than any in the former volumes. It is getting on in the press, and I fully expect to publish it in the course of the summer. Another work which interests me greatly at present is upon a subject which you may perhaps regard with more curiosity — the life of Wesley, upon such a scale as to comprise the history of Methodism abroad and at home, with no inconsiderable part of the religious history of this country for the last hundred years. You know enough of my intellectual habits to know my love of pursuing a subject in its ramifications. Just at this time I am drawing up a succinct account of the origin and economy of the establishment of Herrnhut, — a necessary part of that chapter which is entitled 'Wesley in Germany.' No part of Wesley's conduct is so little creditable to him as that which relates to the Moravians. At first he submitted himself to them in a manner unworthy of his understanding, — as in the affair of his intended marriage with Sophia Cowston; and still more with regard to William Law; and when he separated from them, he did not for a long time render them common justice; but even in some degree sanctioned the abominable calumnies with which they were assailed.* He became wiser and more charitable as he grew older. I have traced the progress of his mind with great care throughout his writings: he outgrew all his extravagances; but it was

* Surely Wesley has said nothing so severe as Southey himself, in the very biography alluded to, concerning the Moravians.

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not easy for him to disown them all. When you see this book, I think you will be satisfied with the diligence of the writer: I believe you will not often dissent from his way of thinking, and I am sure you will entirely sympathise with his feelings.

"Is there no hope of tempting you into this country? Spring is coming on, and you would render me a bodily service by drawing me away from the desk and the fireside to the mountain valleys and the hill-tops. I am not a man to make insincere professions: it would give me a heartfelt pleasure to see you here. The Leeds coach runs to Kendal, and from Kendal there is a morning stage every day to Keswick.

"Last summer I crossed the Alps from Savoy; got as far as Milan; saw the three lakes, Como, Lugano, and Maggiore, and recrossed the Alps into Switzerland; went over the finest part of that country, and then, travelling through the Black Forest to Fribourg, came to Heidelberg and Frankfort, and so by the Rhine to Cologne. I made a minute journal, which was no slight effort; for we travelled fast, and were indefatigable in seeing everything. I brought back a store of images which books had never taught me to call up: perhaps no three months of my life were ever passed so profitably. And I returned with a stock of recruited health that has lasted till now unimpaired; and with spirits as much improved as they are ever likely to be—after the severest of all earthly losses. Come and see me, Montgomery, that we may talk together of this world and of the next. God bless you.

"ROBERT SOUTHEY.

"Mr. Montgomery, Sheffield."

In transcribing the foregoing letter, we experience anew the regret to which we have repeatedly alluded, —that Montgomery never found an opportunity of visiting a man who, with so many elements of generous congeniality, was so anxious to cultivate a nearer personal intimacy with his brother bard.

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On Tuesday, April 14th, the editor of the "Iris" made his final acknowledgments to the public and to particular individuals for what they had done in behalf of the poor Greenlanders; when it appeared that the whole sum actually subscribed in three weeks, within the comparatively limited circuit of the newspaper, was 129*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* exclusive of useful articles of various kinds.

"These gifts," said he, "have been altogether voluntary, in the best sense of the term; they have been such as the givers could not withhold from the impulses of genuine pity. The purest produce of the olive is the oil which distils freely from the gentlest pressure of its fruit; the most precious juice of the grape is that which flows from the thick clusters, heaped abundantly together, without any other compulsion than their own ripe weight, and bursting fulness. The wine and oil which '*the dear English people*' have thus poured into the wounds of the poor Greenlanders, perishing by the wayside, are the purest and most precious of their kind."

The *poem* of "GREENLAND" was at this time unpublished; but *the people* of Greenland had, it is evident, a more than poetical hold of feelings already engaged with the theme, and through which the poet was induced thus zealously to exert himself in "behalf of sufferers so distant, obscure, and unattractive;" over whose country and characters neither eloquence nor poetry, nor romance, had hitherto cast a glory or an interest to excite strong sympathy for their afflictions.*

* Perhaps we may be allowed to adduce a single paragraph from Crantz's "History of Greenland," as illustrative of something more than self-denial on the part of the first missionaries to that inhospitable country: — "The brethren now inured themselves to eating seals' flesh, and prepared their scanty stock of oatmeal with

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James Montgomery to the Rev. Thomas Grinfield.

"Sheffield, May 22. 1818.

"DEAR SIR,

"If you were to receive a letter with my signature, which did not commence with an apology for not writing sooner, you might fairly doubt its genuineness. If you were on the spot just now, my most unanswerable apology would be the sight of a drawer in my desk containing unanswered letters from old friends and new correspondents, which present an appalling array of arrears, — so appalling indeed, that I scarcely dare to face them. Your favour of the — no, I won't tell you the date, and I hope that you have forgotten it, — never went into this receptacle, but has lain before me among some other papers in such a situation that I have been reminded almost every day of my ingratitude in delaying to acknowledge it and thank you for it, as I do now, with all my heart, and at the same time ask forgiveness for what may have appeared *neglect*, but at the worst has only been my *negligence*. In truth, your kind epistle found me slowly recovering from one of the severest illnesses I ever experienced; and in a state of body and mind almost incapable of any prompt exertion. This was sufficient plea to myself to lay it aside for a day or two: but days have grown to weeks, and weeks to months, since then: and now, lest they grow to years in the length of this apology, I will merely add, that for every day I have found the *labour* as well as the *evil* sufficient; and even now I snatch up my pen in a moment of despondency to tell you that I never for *one* moment under-estimated the value of your friendship, or the pleasure and profit of your correspondence, — and to assure

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train-oil, which, revolting as it is to an European stomach, was a luxury in comparison of the old tallow candles they had before been obliged to use for the purpose." And this they endured, be it remembered, not because they could not get away, but because they were determined, at every sacrifice, to do the work of evangelists among a people whose fare was no better than their own.

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you that, though I am (at least, I hope that I am) the worst correspondent in the world, I am one of those who are most sensible of their own faults, and therefore suffer as much as their best and most injured friends could wish them to suffer, while they are equally sensible of the kindness which they abuse, and the forbearance of which they are undeserving.

"Assuredly, among the most delightful and precious hours (few they were and far between) in my six weeks' holidays, last autumn, were those which I spent with *you* on Clifton Down. One so seldom meets with a congenial mind, on some subjects, — nay, on so many subjects (I should say) as we talked of, that an opportunity like that which we enjoyed seems to disburthen the heart of an accumulated weight of thoughts and feelings, and things unuttered and unutterable before, while moments give birth to the conceptions of years. — I am afraid that I tired *you;* for frame and spirit both almost failed *me* after that interview. — I must tear myself away from the remembrance of it now, to notice a few points of your letter. . . . . .

. . . . . .

After I returned home, I worked very diligently on my 'Greenland,' and had finished about one third at the close of the year. Next autumn and winter I hope, if I live, to devote to it, so that it may appear in spring. — I have only room to say that I remain, with best respects to Mrs. G.,

"Your sincere friend,

"JAMES MONTGOMERY.

"The Rev. Thomas Grinfield, Clifton."

For several months preceding and subsequent to this period, the mind of Montgomery was disturbed to a very painful degree by the unsteady conduct of his partner. At length, Mr. Smith suddenly went away from his friends and the town, leaving the affairs of the "Iris" office in a deranged state, and his engagement with it formally violated, but not legally cancelled. After much anxiety, trouble, and delay, the unhappy

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fugitive was overtaken, and on the 31st of August this brief and ill-omened partnership was dissolved, under the mutual signature of the parties, Montgomery refunding to Smith's father 400*l.*, which had been advanced for his share in the business. The young man afterwards worked in London; but, being still unsettled, he finally entered the military service, and went to India, where he died in October 1822.

It happened very opportunely about this time that Mr. John Ray, who had for some time published in Sheffield a monthly periodical called the "Northern Star," gave up the printing business on his own account, and was engaged by Montgomery as general overseer in the office, and to take the management of the books, which had been sadly neglected. Montgomery's attention to pecuniary affairs — where his own interests only were concerned — was truly *poetical*, if we may thus designate an indifference amounting almost to culpability. Such of his debtors as could obtain their accounts might discharge them if they chose to do so: but, if not themselves weary of taking credit, they were in little danger of being asked for money. It is equally worthy of remark, that no person was ever more punctual in his payments than Montgomery; not a single instance having been known of a traveller or other claimant ever leaving the office with his account unpaid. He never in his life sued any one for a debt; and it is no hyperbole to say that he lost hundreds of pounds under the statute of limitations! Was he then rich, and could afford to be indifferent? He probably might have been, but he was not calculated to drive business, and he did not wish to be driven by it; and perhaps his carelessness in this respect had, in some degree, the effect upon him which is not uncommon in such cases,— he felt rather indisposed than willing to risk capital

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in improving his business. As an instance of this, we believe the *long-primer* letter which was used every week in one section of the newspaper had probably been in use in the printing-office during twenty years: and so entirely did the "Iris" exist on the credit of his name and contributions, that, previously to the establishment of its second competitor, few newspapers in the kingdom — none of them being at that time remarkable for their beauty — could boast of less typographical elegance. Mr. Ray, however, induced his principal to obtain a new fount of type; and from this time the paper became in every way improved.

Several numbers of Montgomery's newspaper which appeared in the earlier part of this year, contained long articles, from the pen of the editor as well as from various correspondents, on the interruption of a public meeting of the Church Missionary Society, at Bath, by the Archdeacon of that city, who delivered a protest against the society! Into the grounds of the objection thus unseasonably and unreasonably taken we need not enter; but Montgomery doubtless felt that as a layman and a dissident, he ought to repel the reproach cast upon the friends of a society, the main charge against which was, that it was "supported in conformity to the views of a new sect in the church," a sect which, as he showed, need not and ought not to shrink from the imputation of being "serious Christians" and "Evangelical ministers."

In the summer of this year Montgomery lost a valued friend, for whose tablet he wrote, in consonance with the self-abasing views of the deceased, the following inscription: —

"To the memory of Robert Carr Brackenbury, of Raithby Hall, in the county of Lincoln, Esquire, who, on

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the 11th of August, 1818, in the 66th year of his age, having walked humbly with his God on earth, was received through the merits of his Saviour Jesus into everlasting rest.

"'Silent be human praise!'
The solemn charge was thine;
Thy widow thus obeys,
And o'er thy honoured shrine
Inscribes the monumental stone
With 'Glory be to God alone!'"

The poet maintained a friendly intercourse with Mrs. Brackenbury as long as she lived.

The lines on the "Little Cloud, seen in a Country Excursion, June 30. 1818," describe scenery around Wharncliffe, about eight miles from Sheffield, and of which Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, writing from Avignon, in 1743, after describing the picturesque features of that spot, says — "I often walked thither, where I always found a fresh breeze, and the *most beautiful* land prospect I ever saw — *except* Wharncliffe." Many circumstances "endeared that day" to the poet;

"And made it, in a thousand ways,
A day among a thousand days;"

not the less pleasantly remembered because our friend and a clergyman of the party, on trying to pass the river on their return, by a temporary bridge, both plunged into the water!

In the autumn of this year, the wide-spreading hill-country over which he had so lately seen floating the "Little Cloud" was traversed by him on a mission of mercy. Having been solicited along with his friend

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Mr. Bennet to visit all the schools — upwards of forty — in the Sheffield Sunday-school Union, they "took advantage of the fine weather in the months of August, September, and October to reach those in the country." A Report was drawn up by Montgomery under the names of both the visitors, and afterwards printed.

"On many — on all," says the writer, "of these pleasant Sabbath days' journeys, He who walked unknown with the two disciples to Emmaus accompanied us, not, we trust, unknown, though unseen; and while He communed with our spirits and opened the Scriptures, in the fulfilment of their prophecies concerning Himself at this period by the way, we felt our hearts burn within us, till we could declare from experience, in his own memorable words—'Blessed are they which have not seen and yet have believed.' . . . . In these Sabbath walks, while we enlarged our knowledge of the adjacent district, its mountains and valleys, its tracts of waste and cultivation, its woods, its waters, and its inhabited places, till every hamlet was endeared to our remembrance by some particular and delightful associations, we were more and more deeply impressed with the utility and necessity of Sunday-schools. . . . . We observed that in every neighbourhood where the Gospel was preached [mostly by itinerants] if a school was established first, a chapel soon arose within its enclosure, or at its side; and where the chapel [and it might now be added — or the church] first appeared, the Sunday-school followed as its necessary accompaniment."

In the margin of his own copy of a number of the "Iris" containing a very interesting essay on the state of some of the aboriginal tribes of North America, we found in his handwriting this striking remark, — "*There is no example of Indian slavery.*"

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James Montgomery to the Rev. Dr. Raffles.

"Sheffield, Sept. 2. 1818.

"My dear Friend,

"I will obey the first and best impulse of my heart to answer your letter immediately on receiving it, as I find if I do not acknowledge the favour of your remembrance of me, I shall have no opportunity to-day, — and to-morrow may never come. I can, however, only in a very hasty manner say, that the kindness which I have ever experienced from you, since we first met, has been deeply felt and gratefully remembered; and the continuance of that good-will I shall esteem as one of the consolations of my life. If you knew how much I need such consolations at times, you would rejoice that it was in your power to administer such precious balm to my disordered and self-tormented mind.

"Ever since we met in Liverpool three years ago, I have been passing through a series of temporal adversities, which have made me feel how vain, as well as transient, are worldly possessions. Something like wealth came to me almost as unexpected as snow in summer, and it has disappeared almost as suddenly as such a phenomenon would in nature. Yet have I had no reason to complain, but daily, hourly reason to be thankful, that though my superfluous treasure was of no use, and a great trouble to me, all that I needed I have had in abundance.

"I have at present the prospect that the bulk of what has been long in jeopardy will be eventually secured: but at this very time I have just experienced a deliverance from peril of the most distressing and distracting kind, so far as pecuniary affairs can be so to a man who considers them only as they are — affairs of a moment. A young man whom I have had for a partner about twenty months, after involving himself in many embarrassments, about ten days ago left me abruptly with the avowed purpose of hiding himself from his friends. Yesterday, however, his brother found him, and, by prudent management, got a most satis-

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factory settlement with him, including a dissolution of partnership. He has grievously injured himself; but I have no cause to fear he has hurt me in property, though in mind he has given uneasiness which I cannot express. My own concerns overwhelm me at the present; do forgive me for writing so much about them, when I have not a minute to spare for better subjects. The evening you were in Sheffield, I came home out of the country so late that I could not find courage to call upon you at the inn. I was not aware that Mrs Raffles was with you, or I think I should have ventured to save my credit for gratitude, even at the hazard of being troublesome for a few minutes at an unseasonable hour. I had laid out this month for a journey of pleasure, or rather of relaxation from the cares of business, somewhere or other. But the circumstance which I have mentioned makes me a prisoner; and I know not when I shall get at liberty again. Give my kindest and most respectful remembrance to Mrs. Raffles, and her honoured mother. Whenever we all four meet in my thoughts, as we used to meet in your hospitable parlour, I feel myself in one of the dearest family circles that I know; and I hope that occasionally in that family circle I am remembered as their faithful friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. Thomas Raffles, Liverpool."

Aston's friend, Mr. A. A. Watts, having become the editor of the "New Monthly Magazine," it was determined to give a portrait and memoir of Montgomery, who was written to on the subject.

James Montgomery to Joseph Aston.

"Sheffield, Sept. 23. 1818.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I am in the midst of *troubles*, and have only time to thank you for your kind letter by Mr. Fleming, which breathes the same spirit of affectionate regard that endeared

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you to me at first. A letter from you always renews my youth; but it is only for a few moments: and as my youth was a cold and blighted spring, of which my summer felt, and my autumn now feels, the ungenial influence and the harsh effects, I remember it with less pleasure than most people remember theirs; but this I do know, and freely confess, that our friendship was one of its few enjoyments which I can delight to call to mind, and regret, while I do so, that circumstances have so separated us, and especially have so hedged me about, that without passing it through thorns, I cannot stretch out my hand to you. In truth, I am so situated at present, and have been for a long time past, that I am almost estranged in everything except in heart from my distant friends, and even from my relatives. I am overwhelmed with my daily occupations, and go to bed every evening, scarcely knowing what I have done, and sometimes feeling as if I lived, and thought, and wrote, and talked, and toiled in vain. For eighteen months past I have found no time to proceed on my Greenland poem, though it has been promised more than a year to the public.—But to the business of this scrawl, or I shall not find room to answer your application. I send the only miniature that I have; which is perhaps a likeness of my features, but certainly a spiritless portrait. I have repeatedly sat to artists, but none has ever made anything of me worth looking at; how I am to face posterity, I know not; and I blush to think of such an interview, lean and lank, and unintelligent as my pictured phizzes are! No matter; I shall not be present at the said interview, even if it takes place, that is quite certain, paradoxical as it may appear. Mr. Rhodes has a clever, but ill-coloured portrait of me in crayons, by the late J. R. Smith. This, which I now send, is by Westoby. With regard to any memoir of my life, I can only say, my life is in the hands of those who choose to take it for the amusement of the public. The dates and circumstances in the article which appeared in the 'Monthly Mirror,' in January 1807, I believe are correct; but I have *no* desire to see some of these republished. However, I lie at the mercy

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of your ingenious friend; and, if he be my friend, I am sure he will exercise more discretion than the writer of that sketch displayed either in the narrative or his commentaries, though they were intended both to honour and serve me, and, therefore, I could not complain. I have nothing farther to communicate; having lived to this day — and that is as much as need be said of my late years, though these have been the most interesting to myself, on account of my engagements, of any that I have passed.

"Your sincere friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. Joseph Aston, Exchange Herald Office, Manchester."

In the course of this year a Police Act was obtained for the town of Sheffield; a Gas-light Company was formed; and a Savings' Bank established. In the project and accomplishment of these desirable objects Montgomery took an active and influential part, not only by recommending them in his newspaper, but by his personal co-operation and advice; in a word, commencing that term of active service to each of three institutions which only terminated with his life.

Nor was the first-named of these objects — obviously necessary and beneficial as it was — obtained without encountering popular opposition: indeed, Sanatory Reform was, at the period in question, regarded with a degree of mistrust and dislike hardly less unreasonable perhaps than the revulsion of sentiment and the accident of circumstances which seem to have converted it into a special if not a popular hobby in our day. Montgomery, who always gallantly stood up for the town and the people where his lot had been cast, no more denied the effect of soot on the buildings than the want of cleanliness among the poor.

"Sheffield," said he, "has been *proverbially* black for ages, and perhaps it is *really* so, in comparison with certain

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decayed boroughs and antiquated corporations, the haunts of petty gentry, where the card-playing, well-dressed, well-scented, and everything except well-informed inhabitants are as happy as pride and poverty can make them, and solitary envy or neighbourly scandal will let them be. But we are not willing to allow that Sheffield is so atrociously dark-complexioned as to warrant illiberal aspersions on its beauty and cleanliness from other large manufacturing towns of far more magnificent pretensions, but which on impartial examination will be found not a whit more enviable in their general aspect."

On the demoralising effects of filth, no sanatory commissioner could be more explicit than the editor of the "Iris":—"Between filth and depravity, sloth and licentiousness, darkness and dishonesty, there is more alliance than many people imagine; half the vices of the poor, and more than half their misery, may be traced to their irregularity, negligence, want of economy, and want of cleanliness, in their houses, their habits, and their persons." In proof that time had produced some improvement, and that legislation might effect more, he cited a rhyming *Panegyric* on "Sheffield the black," written by a local poet in the preceding century:—

"Ah! luckless he, who in unhappy hour
Is doomed to walk our streets beneath a shower;
No friendly spout from the projecting eaves
The copious tribute of the clouds receives:
While to our moonless evenings dark and damp,
Imprudent thrift denies the public lamp:
And many a dunghill graces many a street,
While the bright slime betrays unwary feet.
But if from day to day the rain descends,
Hail to that ancle which a boot defends. . . .
May no audacious scavenger presume
To wield the rake, the shovel, or the broom!"

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And this description was far from inapplicable when Montgomery and others sought, and obtained, parliamentary authority to improve the health, comfort, and safety of their town.

We have heard him refer to this period with strong feeling, in connection with the discomfort of the last hours of old Mrs. Gales, and the cause and danger of a long illness of his own. While the venerable woman was actually dying, a quantity of night-soil from adjoining premises was laid so near, and immediately in front of, the house in the Hartshead, that the nuisance, all but intolerable, was the immediate cause of a bloody flux which brought the poet himself to the very verge of that grave to which, with difficulty, he had attended the remains of the mother of his friends. From this severe illness he was happily raised up to re-assume his official duties: and it may easily be imagined, that having thus personally suffered—as his townspeople must often have done also—from a detestable local annoyance, which the magistrate assured him he had *no power* to interfere with, Montgomery would heartily concur with his townsmen in obtaining the "Police Act" which was so largely beneficial to all the inhabitants of Sheffield.

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CHAP. XLVI.

1819.

BURNS AND THE BIBLE. — MEMOIR OF MONTGOMERY. — LETTER FROM REV. MR. LATROBE. — LETTER TO REV. IGNATIUS MONTGOMERY. — LETTER TO ASTON. — "GREENLAND." — SINGING AND PSALMODY. — COTTERILL'S SELECTION. — ARCHBISHOP'S HYMN-BOOK. — HYDROPHOBIA. — PUBLICATION OF "GREENLAND, AND OTHER PIECES." — MORAVIAN MISSIONARIES. — LETTER TO REV. J. EVERETT. — MONTGOMERY AT HULL. — LETTER TO MR. COOKMAN.

MONTGOMERY'S business affairs were now moving smoothly, and indeed prosperously; but without increasing his solicitude for their enlarged success. His "leaders" in the "Iris," if not less full and frequent — for omission as well as brevity might be noted,— were rather more than less remarkable for the leaning they evinced towards the elucidation of moral, religious, or literary, than political, topics; a taste but little in accordance with the sympathies of newspaper readers in general.

Among the leading evangelical institutions in which he took an active part, the Bible Society engaged, as we have said, his zealous advocacy; and in the course of this, as of the preceding year, he wrote the published reports of the Sheffield Auxiliary. Having enumerated various beneficial results of these associations in the "Iris" of February 2nd, he thus adverted to his countrymen across the Tweed: —

"We must break off here; but not till we have reminded

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our readers of the most delightful passage in the most delightful poem which Scotland (that land of poets and poetry) has ever produced; Scotland, whose peasantry are exposed to hardships, self-denials, and mortifications, almost unknown to our poor; and which peasantry, notwithstanding, are among the most virtuous and contented in the world. And why? they have the Bible; and every child can read it; and every father is qualified to be the priest at his own family altar. Burns, the inimitable, the unfortunate Burns, in a few stanzas of his 'Cottar's Saturday Night,' describes a scene, the blessedness of which none could more dearly estimate or more faithfully pourtray; for he had known it, both by the enjoyment and the loss. Had he always chosen themes as pure, as noble, and as affecting, — had he always written in the spirit of simplicity, tenderness, piety, and patriotism, which

"'—— pours a sensibility divine
Along the nerve of every feeling line'

in this incomparable record of love, peace, and joy, in the home of a poor but happy circle,—he might have been one of the greatest benefactors, not to his countrymen only, but to the whole human race; for, while such strains were worthy to be translated into every language under heaven, and must be intelligible wherever truth and nature can find utterance or excite sympathy, there is not a spot on the face of the inhabited earth in which such manners and such sentiments would not be at once and for ever interesting."

He then cites the well-known stanzas commencing "The cheerful supper done," &c.

The memoir of the poet which appeared in the January number of the "New Monthly Magazine," with a portrait from a miniature by Westoby, was read with considerable interest from the evidence which it bore of information derived from a confidential quarter.

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On some points, however, the writer had so expressed himself as to convey an impression widely different from what Montgomery himself would have been willing to indorse as his present opinions, especially those relative to the United Brethren.

Rev. C. F. Ramftler to James Montgomery.

"Fulneck, Jan. 20. 1819.

"DEAR BROTHER MONTGOMERY,

"It is but due that I should gratefully acknowledge the receipt of your favour, inclosing five guineas, being your annual contribution to the end of 1818, for our congregation, missions, &c. You will not take it unkind when I presume to notice to you a guinea which you kindly offered towards the synodal expenses, and which may have slipped your memory. . . . .

"How do you approve of what the 'New Monthly Magazine' says of you, and particularly of your education here? Do you yourself ascribe your tendency to depression of spirits * to our mode of education?

"That yours is a life of woe, you probably acknowledge as a providential mercy; a thorn in the flesh being sometimes needful for God's favoured children, to preserve them in lowliness at the foot of the cross; — while unbelieving fears and a want of holy boldness may sometimes add pain to the mind which is not providentially designed.

"May we soon expect your poem of 'Greenland'? This day is the memorial of that mission.

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* Whatever he may have thought of the effect of the system as it was in his boyhood, and upon his own peculiar disposition, it is quite certain that long before, as well as always after, this time, he not only liberally subscribed towards the exigencies of the school, but recommended it to his friends. It may not be improper to mention in this place that a donation of thirteen guineas to Fulneck School, entered in the Report of 1823 as from "An Old Economy Boy," was given by Montgomery.

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"With kindest salutation, I remain your affectionate friend and Brother,

"C. F. RAMFTLER.

"Mr. James Montgomery, Hartshead, Sheffield."

James Montgomery to the Rev. Ignatius Montgomery.

"Sheffield, Feb. 1819.

"I was deeply affected and humbled by the account of Henry's [Steinhaur's] happy death. 'What will be said of me,' thought I, 'when I am gone?' And I may well say so, seeing such strange things are said of me while I am alive. That memoir in the 'Monthly Magazine,' you may be sure was written without my cognisance, any further than I was told that such a thing would be done by somebody, and I was asked if I had any materials to furnish, to which I replied 'No.' From the quarter whence the application came, I suspected who might be the writer, and he has since avowed it. He is one of my early friends in politics and poetry; but we never lived within forty miles of each other. Formerly I corresponded often with him, and I suspect he has made much use of my letters, though it is evident that he has often misunderstood me, and certainly knows much less of what I am than of what I was, for we seldom exchange a letter now, and have only met once in ten years, that I recollect. He is altogether wrong respecting the Brethren, and I have told him so very plainly. . . . .

"Yours, affectionately,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. Ignatius Montgomery."

James Montgomery to Joseph Aston.

"Sheffield, Jan. 28. 1819.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"If I wait for time I may never answer your kind letter. I must therefore make time, — that is, steal it; and,

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amidst more perplexities than I could explain in a volume, reply in direct terms to the several points on which you touch. Of your goodness towards me in the composition to which you allude, I am deeply sensible ; to your friendship, and to your friendship alone, I am indebted for the warmth of colouring with which my character has been pourtrayed on this occasion. It would be in vain, and perhaps ungrateful, were I to complain of excess in this respect, because you who see me with eyes too partial, and through a medium, as well as from a distance, which renders it impossible for you accurately to estimate either the qualities of my mind or the feelings of my heart, — *you* could not easily be persuaded that you are mistaken in your judgment concerning one whom you have known so many years, and under circumstances so peculiar as those which brought us into mutual acquaintance and united us in the bonds of friendship. I, however, know myself better, and I hope that I shall be able to bear meekly the honours you have heaped upon me. Twenty years ago such an exhibition of the imaginary being which I am in your esteem, might have turned my brain with the fond persuasion that all was true. I am far, very far, from the weakness of vanity even now ; but so wofully are its sensibilities changed, that 'the nerve where agony is born' vibrates at every touch, and seldom has suffered more exquisitely than in reading some of those glowing passages in which you gave indulgence to all the generosity of your nature. But I must not find fault where none existed or could exist in your ingenuous mind. With respect to the narrative, though the materials are generally authentic, you must not be surprised, that, from the necessary imperfection of those materials, facts are occasionally so represented as to make an incorrect impression : I shall not notice any of these, except to say that whatever you have stated or presumed — from your views of the subjects — concerning the Moravian Brethren, is liable to this charge. You understand so little of their character, their discipline, and their doctrines, that I don't wonder — though I must regret — that you have not done them

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justice. I fear that much offence may be taken among them, especially at your intimation of the origin of my melancholy habits. Alarm has already spread, and I have been called upon from a most respectable quarter, and from one having authority over me, to know whether *I* attribute those unhappy feelings to the education which I received among them? I shall answer plainly and truly, that I do not: an injury seems to be apprehended from this passage to their schools, which are perhaps the best institutions of the kind in the three kingdoms, and are made most extensively beneficial to children and youth of all denominations, being conducted on plans the most liberal and comprehensive that are consistent with the communication of genuine knowledge and pure and undefiled religion. In my time the schools were much smaller, and the discipline more peculiarly characteristic of the people, for none but Moravian children were admitted into them. You seem from many phrases, which sound like my own, sprinkled throughout your memoir, to have made use of materials with which I myself must have furnished you in letters and conversations. These were certainly legitimate ones; but you must be aware that they could not be otherwise employed than as fragments and hints, connected with facts and unexplained at the time. I am not, however, aware of any misrepresentation arising from the misapprehension of these. I thank you for not expressing either the name or the nature of the humorous work to which you have alluded. As for the Play, it was communicated only in confidence, and peculiar confidence; had *it* been mentioned, I should have been exceedingly hurt indeed; not that I expect or desire the thing itself to be kept for ever secret. I know that both my sins and my follies must find me out some time or other, and will be proclaimed on the housetops: but my day of judgment, even in this world, is not yet come.*

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* It can hardly be necessary to point out to any reader of these pages the proper distinction here made, and which points to and justifies in a posthumous memoir the publication of matter that

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Should I even in self-defence — though it will be a series of self-accusations — write any memoirs of my wretched and unprofitable life in comparison with what it ought to have been, I shall not conceal that or any other literary folly, except one, which you have forgotten, from those who may be curious to know what I really was, and not what my friends believed me to be. You are right respecting *my* 'Greenland.' It is a poem; and I am now, when I can snatch a few minutes at a time, diligently revising and transcribing it. The 'History of Greenland' I have procured for Longman and Co. from some friends of mine, who are republishing Crantz with considerable enlargements. . . . . I have sold *none* of my copyrights; they are entirely my own: Longman and Co. publish all at their own expense and hazard, and annually divide profits with me. I have received about sixteen hundred pounds from them; and this includes one hundred and eighty pounds presented to me, at three different times, over and above my share of profits. I have good reason I think to expect that my new volume will, in two years, produce me from 300*l.* to 400*l.*; and, if it takes with the public, 100*l.* yearly for some time afterwards.

"I am truly
"Your obliged and affectionate friend,
"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. Joseph Aston, Manchester."

In a letter written three weeks later (Feb. 20.) Montgomery thanks Aston for explanations relative to the memoir, which were "perfectly satisfactory;" adding, "I am this day exceedingly indisposed, and slowly recovering from one of the severest fits of illness," he had ever experienced. "My 'Greenland,'" says he, "is gone to press; and I hope the volume will appear

could not with propriety be so dealt with during the author's lifetime.

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about the end of March. . . . I have not chosen a popular, and still less a fashionable style or subject. My plan has nothing to do with the late expeditions to the Pole, &c. It was conceived before *they* were conceived, — that is, before the middle of 1817."

Among the great changes for the better, which the present century has witnessed, may be mentioned improvements in the matter, if not in the manner, of congregational singing. The exquisite compositions of Watts had, indeed, long been in use among the Independents, and the more fervid strains of the Wesleys and their coadjutors had aided the life of devotion in Methodism from its very beginning; while, with some exceptions in favour of more modern, if not more inspiring, measures, the majority of our churches retained their attachment to the antiquated psalmody of Sternhold and Hopkins. Of this work, which it had become the fashion to praise, Montgomery could never be persuaded to think so highly as some persons did; he admitted that "a few nervous and pathetic stanzas might be found here and there; for it was impossible in so long an adventure to escape falling into a better way now and then." The objection of obsolete phraseology had been obviated by the introduction, in many places, occasionally at least, of the *New Version*, as the compositions of Tate and Brady are denominated: this work Montgomery considered to be "nearly as inanimate, though a little more refined," than its venerable predecessor. Of the version of the Psalms by Merrick, certainly a scholar and a poet, but for whose performance the royal license was solicited in vain, he said, "It is only wonderful that the privilege should ever have been sought, on the recommendation of men of learning and taste, in behalf of a work of such

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immeasurable verbiage as these paraphrases exhibit." * It had, indeed, long before this time been discovered that under the most favourable circumstances, and with every wish to avoid innovation, none of these versions were adequate to the wants of a Christian congregation composed of individuals to whom the Gospel was faithfully preached, and who were respectively seeking or enjoying in its fulness the religion of the New Testament. Under these circumstances had commenced the practice, now common, of compiling and introducing into churches *Hymn-books* of different degrees of poetical merit and modes of evangelical expression, wherever the minister deemed it of importance that the people should "sing with the spirit and with the understanding also."

The perpetual curate of St. Paul's Church in Sheffield at this time was the Rev. Thomas Cotterill, previously of Lane End in Staffordshire, an amiable, intelligent, and zealous minister. In this excellent man, Montgomery found a spirit of piety and a desire of religious usefulness kindred to his own: they became firm and mutually attached "friends." † Mr. Cotterill had previously published "a Selection of Psalms and Hymns," which had become popular elsewhere; and he now became anxious to engage the aid of Montgomery, in revising and improving the work for the service of his own congregation. To this "labour of love," the poet readily consented; contributing not only the benefit of his judgment in the choice and amendment of available compositions from various quarters, but a number of his own best hymns: and in due course,

* Introductory Essay to Christian Psalmist.

† The touching verses afterwards published under this title were written on the death of Mr. Cotterill.

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the book was printed, and introduced to the seat-holders of St. Paul's Church.

This procedure, however, from various little circumstances connected with private views and personal feelings (in which, however, Montgomery was no way directly implicated), gave great umbrage to several individuals, who immediately set up the most decided opposition to the aims of their pastor. So high did this spirit of resistance run,— involving, as it increased, other consequences of importance in its general bearing, — that after many unedifying altercations among the parties, and several ineffectual attempts to settle the business by the mediation of friends, the cause was at length carried into the Ecclesiastical Court at York, where it was tried, in July 1820, before Granville Venables Vernon, A. M., commissary on the occasion. The question was considered one of importance to the clergy and members of the Church of England generally, and much interest and anxiety were manifested concerning the legal issue. The process was terminated, however, by both parties consenting to adopt the mediation of the Archbishop. His grace acted on the occasion with great judgment, firmness, and liberality: he resolved to select such Psalms and Hymns as, approved of by himself, might be presumed to be acceptable to the parties at difference; and to present copies of the same to the seat-holders, in lieu of those they had purchased. The authorised selection itself consists chiefly of matter derived from the objected book, with some additions from that used at Bishopthorpe. In fact, the selection was ultimately revised by the very individuals who had originated it, and who conducted it through the press, Montgomery himself reading the proofs in Sheffield, as they came from the King's printer in London. This Hymn-book,

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which was dedicated to the Archbishop, has long been generally used in the Sheffield churches and elsewhere in the diocese of York.

Most readers of Montgomery's poetry will recollect the allusion to his dog "Billy" in "Prison Amusements," as his "fond companion," and "the kindest of four-footed friends," during his memorable abode in York Castle in 1796. Nor was "Billy," as we have seen, the last of these faithful quadrupeds which he had owned and caressed: but for many years previous to the present time he had not possessed a dog; and owing to the alarming prevalence of hydrophobia in Sheffield this summer, his feelings seemed to be exercised in a distaste, not to say a horror, of the canine race.* On more than one occasion, indeed, he became the public advocate for the wholesale destruction of a vile and useless class of these animals which infested and disgraced the town.†

The following account — curious in itself — was written under the influence of intense feeling, after receiving and investigating the case of a young man who had died of hydrophobia: —

"There is a secrecy about the access, the latency, the ac-

* In 1760, several cases of hydrophobia having been reported in London, there was a general slaughter of dogs, now chiefly remembered through Goldsmith's playful lines, and the whining sympathy which, not without a dash of profanity, Walpole so much more promptly extended to the "good-natured, honest, sensible" brutes, than to thousands of his fellow-creatures, who were surely not less deserving of his kind words.

† He presently relented, however, in this persecution of his canine friends, and within a few weeks published, in the name of one of them, a long letter entitled "A Case of Real Distress," describing how often tethered dogs are left to suffer terribly for want of water.—*Iris*, July 6. 1818.

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tion, and the issue of this destroyer, almost as impenetrable as the realities of the invisible world, which we know to exist without the possibility of apprehending their mode of existence by any of our senses . . . . He (the deceased) had, at the utmost, carelessly handled a dog that died of what is vulgarly called 'the distemper,' and through some imperceptible puncture of the skin the contagion entered as quietly as a ray of light falls upon the eye, and was undistinguished among the millions of momentary sensations that form the links of that chain of conscious existence which is felt in the whole, while the parts are too minute and evanescent to be detected and separated by the most exquisite scrutiny. During the progress of his agonies, the deceased possessed perfect presence of mind, and, except under the highest paroxysms of involuntary exasperation, manifested the most gentle, considerate, and compliant disposition. Towards his wife he showed a tenderness most affecting to the beholders, and indeed the horrors of his situation were softened beyond anything that they had ever heard of persons so agonised, by the amiable and generous feelings of an unsophisticated heart frequently bursting forth with passionate expressions of gratitude, attachment, and good will. He seemed to die by too rapid a combustion of life, as if the flame that in the course of nature might have warmed and cheered existence for forty years to come, had all been condensed and expended in the space of two days; sensibility being so quickened that a drop of liquid was as difficult to swallow as the ocean, and a breath of air as terrible as the blast of the simoom." *

On Saturday, April 24. 1819, appeared "Greenland," and other pieces, which had been long promised and expected. "In the leading poem of this collection, the author frankly acknowledges that he has so far failed, as to be under the necessity of sending it forth

* Iris, April 13.

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incomplete, or suppressing it altogether." The motto on the title page "*Oft var ek dasa, dur ek dro thick* — Oft was I weary when I drew thee," was understood to signify that he had not invariably plied the poetic oar with a tireless hand and a cheerful heart.

It has been alleged that the poem, highly finished, graphic, and touching as it is in parts, wants action, a distinct centre of interest to which the different parts should bear an obvious relation, enlisting the sympathies of the reader in the expectation of some important result, — in one word, a story. As it is, the incidents of the narrative are only individualised in a series of episodes, some of which are very beautiful; while the main characteristics of the work are the glowing descriptions of those peculiar natural phenomena with which the accounts of arctic navigators have of late years made us so familiar. Some persons have indeed supposed that the work owed its existence to the perusal of these accounts: this was not the case — for the publications of Crantz, Risler, and Egede, with which the poet was very familiar, are of a different class. The idea of "Greenland," as Montgomery informed Mr. Holland, originated entirely with himself. "It was," said he, "during the autumn of 1815 that I first thought upon the subject, and at that period I sketched a plan of the poem." *Holland:* "I am surprised that you have not given us at least an episode on the subject of the whale-fishery; I think if any poet of competent part had the courage to encounter a voyage to Greenland in a whaling-vessel, a fine poem might be written on that subject in connection with the wonders of the hyperborean regions."* *Montgomery:* "It does indeed

* In 1839 the Rev. J. R. Blackley, of Rotherham, published the "Greenland Minstrel, a Poem in Six Cantos," the result of

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contain some fine materials for poetry; but I had not arrived at the whale-fishery; for I certainly intended an episode on that subject." It was not, however, till 1817 that a fair and complete transcript of the whole poem was made, as appears from a memorandum in the MS. which the poet afterwards presented to Mr. Holland as a memorial of friendship. This draught, carefully and beautifully written, as originally intended for the press, exhibits innumerable variations from the printed copy, all interesting, as illustrating the processes by which he elaborated and condensed his sentiments into that precision and elegance so characteristic of his later compositions, and of which "Greenland" in particular contains some exquisite specimens. It might be tedious, and out of place here, to specify in detail the variations alluded to; but, as a specimen, the following eight lines of exordium, which do not appear in the published work, may be acceptable: —

> "Give me a theme to grace an angel's tongue;—
> A theme to which a lyre was never strung;
> Barbarian hordes, by Satan's craft enthralled,
> From chains to freedom, wrath to glory called;—
> The deeds of men, rejected and abhorred
> By bigot priests, but chosen of the Lord,
> With faithful toil a barren land to bless,
> And plant an Eden in the wilderness."

"Greenland" is emphatically, as it was intended to have been much more largely, *a missionary poem:* it is at the same time a filial tribute paid by the genius of the author to his mother church, which had hardly be-

a personal visit to the arctic circle. If the whale-fishery has failed to inspire a poet, it has been the subject of several animated prose narratives which have appeared of late years.

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fore been mentioned in song, with the exception of a single note in recognition of the labours of the Moravians in the "farthest north," previously struck by Cowper in his poem of "Hope:"—

> "Fired with a zeal peculiar, *they* defy
> The rage and rigour of a polar sky,
> And plant successfully sweet Sharon's rose
> On icy plains and in eternal snows."

Montgomery has fondly embalmed the memory of the leaders in this Christian enterprise, in a description of their voyage with which his poem opens:—

> "Lo! on the deck, with patriarchal grace,
> Heaven in his bosom opening o'er his face,
> Stands Christian David—venerable name! *
> Though hoary with the multitude of years,
> Unshorn of strength, between his young compeers,"

Matthew and Christian Stach. The story of the devotedness of these three simple, single-hearted Germans to their one object of preaching the Gospel to the Greenlanders, has hardly a parallel in the annals of any other church.

Of the "other poems," published with "Greenland," it is only necessary to say they were considered worthy of the reputation of their author.†

* The name of this intrepid missionary to the icy regions of Northern Europe will probably remind the religious reader of another Christian David, who was ordained by Bishop Heber in the fiery climate of the East Indies: his father was a convert of the venerable Swartz, the boy himself having waited upon the apostolic missionary.—*Life of Swartz*, vol. i. p. 398.

† In the "Eclectic" for September, 1819, there is a very candid review of "Greenland."

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During the early part of this year Montgomery was induced to visit Hull, for the purpose of being present at the Methodist Missionary Meeting there. To Mr. Everett, who managed the negotiation on the part of the committee, he made at first only a conditional promise:—"You must [not] lean more upon such a bruised reed as I am, than to calculate on the possibility, in the course of God's gracious providence, of my being with you as a partaker, and, by being a partaker, a helper, of your joy; for on these occasions the joy is multiplied by being divided. If it appears probable that I may reach you at the time proposed, I will write again in the preceding week." He added in a "P. S.—I remember the person whose signature *your* letter bears on more occasions than that which you mention, and am happy in his kind esteem. My poem, entitled 'Greenland,' with other smaller pieces, is gone to press, and will appear about the beginning of April." Mr. Everett had ventured to recommend the publication of the poet's name in the large bills which were posted on the walls. This display—so common in after years—was not a little annoying to him on this occasion: and in a letter, after adverting to a violent cold under which he was suffering, he strongly protests against such a method of turning his reputation to account, which, while it afterwards became too common to provoke complaint, scarcely ever failed to cause him more or less annoyance.

James Montgomery to the Rev. James Everett.

"Sheffield, April 10. 1819.

"Dear Sir,

"To-day I consider myself so far convalescent as to hope that on Tuesday next it may be prudent to venture on the journey, and in that case I suppose I shall reach

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Hull the same evening. I was sorry to hear this morning (for I have not seen it) that my name had been announced in an advertisement, on some missionary occasion (my informer did not recollect where), and I conclude this must be at Hull, as I have declined every other application that has been made to me from distant towns except yours. Against any printed notice of my name, or public notice in any form, exciting unwarrantable expectation, I have always protested; and if such has been given at Hull, I cannot but lament that my friends have not spared me this humiliation. I say this from a deep sense of infirmity and imperfection, beyond anything, perhaps, which you can imagine, in all my exertions, but especially when I open my lips in a public meeting. Whatever temptations I may have to vanity, I have always buffetings enough to make me lie down in the dust.

"I am, truly, your friend and servant,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. J. Everett, Hull."

On arriving at the inn, Montgomery immediately wrote a note to Mr. Everett, intimating that he was at the service of his Hull friends and of the meeting. Mr. E. instantly went to him, and after apologising, as well as he could, for the publicity which had been given to his name, conducted him to the house of Mr. Cookman, in East Parade, where he met with every convenience and attention. During the progress of his speech, an unlucky incident occurred. The chapel was densely crowded; and the spirits of the congregation had been a good deal exhausted by the amount of *reading* to which they had listened from one of the gentlemen on the platform, when Montgomery commenced his address. He was evidently in a state of great weakness, and exhibited more than his usual natural timidity. Before he had spoken five minutes,

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a false alarm of danger was raised by some person in the gallery. As might be expected, a sudden and violent commotion took place among the audience: the speaker shrunk back, sat down on a low seat at the feet of the chairman, apparently stupified, and covered his face with his handkerchief, while this single thought crossed his mind: "Good God! I am sitting here, while hundreds around me are breaking one another's bones, or crushing each other to death, and yet I cannot feel for one of them!" In the course of about ten minutes order was restored, and, as it happily turned out, comparatively little injury had been sustained by any one. He rose again; and, as he himself remarked, that whereas before the alarm every bone appeared dry and dead, afterwards each seemed to start into life and motion in an instant. "There was one universal movement, I am sure," added he, "when I rose again to address the meeting; it seemed like a resurrection of thought and feeling; I looked no more behind me, but went on with energy, rapidity, and ease."

As the port of Hull derived a great part of its support from various shipping interests, in connection with the Davies' Straits and Greenland fisheries, he expatiated with great freedom and effect on the obligation under which the inhabitants lay to promote the spiritual interests of the poor Greenlanders in particular. Adverting to Africa, he asked what was it in the interior? Some would represent it as a land of Eden, where only youth, beauty, and innocence reigned! That these epithets did not characterise the natives was but too well known: and as to the country, with all its wonders, luxuries, and splendour, if it represent Paradise at all, it was Paradise Lost: for in the fatal perils of the torrid zone, God seemed to have placed, as it were, the cherubim with flaming swords, turning every way to

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smite our travellers and missionaries with disease and death. At all events, as far as we had penetrated towards the interior of that wonderful country, we had found the scenery a wilderness of beauty, and the inhabitants savages, who wanted both civilising and evangelising.

In connection with this visit to Hull may be here given two letters, one addressed to the son of his worthy host, the other to Mr. Cookman himself. They show at once the depressed state of the writer's mind at the time, and his feelings of gratitude towards those who had entertained him.

"Sheffield, June 24. 1819.

"MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

"Your kind father informs me that a line from me would not be unwelcome to you; and it is so seldom that youth, healthy and happy, and glowing with hope, attach themselves to strangers like me, with melancholy looks and moralising discourse, who cross them in their path of enjoyment, that I confess I begin to think I am not utterly unamiable in my lowest state of animal spirits and intellectual exercise, so long as my heart can feel the humbling influence of the love of God, and beat with gratitude to those who for his sake are good to me. This, I think, was truly my case at your father's house; and that his children were not frightened at me, but have even remembered me with tenderness, is a consolation that is not only soothing in the reflection, but will be encouraging to me hereafter, should I again, under similar affliction of body and mind, be called to sojourn for a time in a strange town, and live in the presence of faces, and in the sound of voices, which I never saw or heard before, and may never see or hear again till the day of resurrection. Be assured that, though I might talk less than you desired, my silence has impressed you with at least as high an opinion of my wisdom as my speech would have done, had you listened to it all day long. Neither rhyme, nor blank verse, nor eloquence, nor philo-

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sophy, would have flowed from my lips. I should have chatted about the wind and the weather, and the land and the water, and politics, and commonplace topics of every kind, the same as other people. Then, indeed, you might have been disappointed in me; and I feel that it was to my advantage not to be able to betray all my weakness. However, I am glad of this opportunity of saying, that while I was at Hull, there was not a blessing of time which God may see good to bestow on you, or a blessing of eternity which he has promised, but which from the ground of my heart I prayed that you might receive and improve.

"I am, truly, your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. Alfred Cookman."

We transcribe the following from the original on the same sheet with the foregoing:—

"Sheffield, June 24, 1819.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have not neglected your letter, though I have delayed to answer it. It would take more paper than I have to spare, after writing two or three lines to Alfred, to tell the reasons of that delay; I will therefore waste none on the subject. I thank you sincerely, not only for all the kindness and hospitality which I experienced under your roof during my short visit to Hull, but for the very friendly interest you still take in the welfare of one who, while he was with you, could be little more than an object of compassion and solicitude.

I arrived at home as well as I could desire under such circumstances; and in bodily health, though much wearied, I was certainly no worse for the exertion and fatigue of the journey. Since then, however, I have had much to suffer from indisposition; at present, I am better, and hope soon to leave home for several weeks, for the express purpose of enjoying that rest of mind and exercise of limbs, which I cannot have in my ordinary course at home. I saw Mr. Everett a few weeks after I had been at Hull, and heard of

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your trials by family affliction. As 'all things *do* work together for good to them that love God,' I cannot doubt but the sufferings which you, and those who are dear to you, experience, are 'blessings in disguise,' as Dr. Watts sings; but only in disguise as angels are when they put on human forms, to hold direct communication with those to whom they are sent. The angel with whom Jacob wrestled was such an one; for though he touched the patriarch under the thigh and made him a cripple for life, he left him a blessing and a name which his posterity inherit to this day; but, from hardness of heart and blindness of understanding, they *have* only the name, the blessing being *now* in disguise indeed, till the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and so all Israel be saved. At the same time, I deeply sympathise with you in these things; and so far as the burthen of them is lightened, I rejoice with you. Remember me, with the greatest respect and gratitude, to your excellent partner in life, and your sister: may each of them have all the good qualities both of Martha and Mary! Though I have written to Alfred, I have not forgotten his brother; but having had an opportunity of pleasing him by writing something on his manuscript, I thought it due to Alfred to give him some assurance of my equal good will and good wishes.

"I am, very truly, your obliged friend and servant,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. Cookman, Hull."

The "something" alluded to in the letter was the hymn commencing "Lord, when we search the human heart," written on the only blank page of a juvenile missionary address of this excellent young man.*

* Mr. George Cookman, who is here alluded to, afterwards went to the United States, where he married, and settled as a minister of the Gospel. Sailing for England, on a religious mission, he was lost in the "President" steamship; "that fatal and perfidious bark," whose mysterious foundering somewhere amid the vast Atlantic filled so many hearts with mourning both in Europe and America in 1841.

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CHAP. XLVII.

1819.

MISS MONTGOMERY'S VISIT TO SHEFFIELD. — LETTER TO ASTON. — SERVANT-GIRL AND LOTTERY-TICKET. — BIBLE MEETING AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON. — STRIKING SCENE ON THE OCCASION. — "THOUGHTS AND IMAGES." — RADICALISM. — LETTER TO REV. IGNATIUS MONTGOMERY. — A NEW SHEFFIELD NEWSPAPER. — GREAT OPPORTUNITIES MAKE GREAT MEN. — POLITICIANS OF 1795 AND 1819. — GREECE AND TURKEY. — PORTRAIT BY J. R. SMITH.

In the beginning of this summer Montgomery's eldest niece — the daughter of his brother Robert at Woolwich — paid him a visit at Sheffield: he had not seen her for a period of five years; so that the charming girl whom he had so long ago left at school, somewhat surprised him by her present appearance as a very fine and lovely young woman, at once amiable, animated, and intelligent. During her brief sojourn with the Misses Gales, he found her a very pleasant companion. Her healthful buoyancy of spirit and unaffected vivacity of manner contrasted most strikingly with the grave demeanour of her uncle: indeed, in the playful sallies of her mirth, she often broke in upon the privacy of his meditations at the desk; but this, so far from annoying or irritating him, seemed rather to produce in his character and habits a temporary metamorphosis, by causing him to become

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more free and familiar, and even playful. She became the companion of his social visits and of his rural walks, thus infusing a peculiar sweetness into his leisure hours, and many of his hours became such for her amusement and gratification. He not only made several short excursions to pleasant spots in the neighbourhood of Sheffield, but to some of the more picturesque parts of Derbyshire, for the purpose of showing her the scenery: and he was especially gratified whenever she manifested feeling, or expressed admiration, in connection with the objects of their curiosity. How much he was impressed with a sentiment of hers, uttered while environed with the rocky barriers of Middleton Dale, when they visited that far-famed and romantic district of the High Peak, will be seen from his introduction of it, six years afterwards, as the exordium of his speech at the public dinner given to him on his retirement from the "Iris." Within doors and without, her presence appeared to throw a streak of warmer and richer colouring across the "cool, sequestered vale" of the poet's ordinary life; the familiar appellations of "Betsy" and "Uncle" being uttered with an evident reciprocal endearment, which their friends almost involuntarily shared.

Among other places which they visited was Wincobank Hall, the residence of Joseph Read, Esq., who, with his interesting family, had long been endeared to Montgomery on the grounds of personal piety and general benevolence. Of one of these visits a memento exists in the following extempore lines written in Miss Eliza Rawson's album: —

"Be this small book, in every part,
An emblem of the owner's heart;

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No thought, no feeling be expressed,
Unworthy of a maiden-breast,
Whether kind wishes, counsel sage,
Or gay good humour grace the page;
That everywhere the eye may find
Some trace of an ingenuous mind;
Some sweet memorial of such love
As buds below — to bloom above:
And, oh! may God so guide and bless
Her friends through this world's wilderness,
That all the names recorded here,
May in His Book of Life appear!

"May 7. 1819."

Miss Montgomery in due time went back to Woolwich, and there presently became Mrs. Foster.

James Montgomery to Joseph Aston.

"Sheffield, Aug. 4. 1819.

"My dear Friend,

"The days are gone by when I delighted to dip my pen into my inkstand, and find thoughts and words there to pour upon paper, and express all the fulness of my heart. I have lived long enough, and have made sufficient noise in the world to have gained many friends, with whom I must occasionally hold communion by letter; and to be exposed to the interruptions, both personal and epistolary, of strangers, whose conversation and correspondence are equally burthensome and harassing to one who dreads to see a face which he does not meet with every day, even though it be that of his best friend or nearest relative; and who, while he knows few pleasures equal to the reception of kind letters from whomsoever they may come, knows few penances more mortifying than to sit down to the task of replying. . . . I should hesitate exceedingly to say anything to the disadvantage of a former editor of the 'New Monthly Magazine,' who was my schoolfellow for many years; and though we have only

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once exchanged letters during the last quarter of a century, and once met in the same interval, I could not enter upon a question which might lead to his prejudice. At the same time, I do not know either when he began or when he discontinued his connection with that work.* To Mr. W——, for his liberality and kindness, through the medium of that publication and your correspondence, towards myself, I am truly grateful, and shall be happy to prove myself so, should the opportunity ever occur. I must not forget to add, that I perused your daughter's stanzas, published in the 'N. M.,' with twofold pleasure—because they were in themselves pleasing, and because I thought how much her father—aye, and her mother too—had been pleased with them. May the daughter answer all her parents' hopes, by being a lively and perpetual answer to their prayers for her! Wiffen's 'Æonian Hours' I have not seen; but I know his genius and his worth, and honour him for both. His are talents to which I fear the world will be slow in doing justice,—if justice be done at all to them. There never was an age in which more good poetry was written than the present, or in which poetical talent was better rewarded by its true patrons, the *readers* of poetry; but this very circumstance renders it exceedingly difficult to command attention and secure admiration. Byron and Moore—to say nothing of Scott, Wordsworth, and Campbell—carry all before them; and I am not disposed to quarrel with them or the public that I am left so far behind in talent and popularity; though I cannot read the works of either without lamenting the general character of their poetry. If they are always as beautiful, they are sometimes as terrible, as the serpent that beguiled Eve. Byron, indeed, is no man, as men are now-a-days—he is one of Nature's prodigious births; and more original, powerful, and sweet, with all his wildness and barbarism, and dissonance, than all his living brethren put

* Mr. F. Shoberl is here meant; with him, as well as with his editorial successor, Montgomery in after years corresponded frequently when they became connected with Annuals.

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together; and among the dead I can find nothing like him, though a few may be equal, or superior, taking them all in all. You think his 'Mazeppa' unworthy of him. This is too high a compliment: it is not his best; but if, as you hint, such poetry might be undertaken by the acre, he is the only one who could execute the contract. For my part, if I could manage a rood, I should sing, 'Exegi monumentum ære perennius.' Your remarks on my last volume are dictated by all the friendly feelings of your heart towards the author. Of 'Greenland,' I do not say that I never will renew the theme, but I scarcely hope that circumstances will permit me.

"Believe me, your obliged friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. Joseph Aston, Manchester."

About a fortnight afterwards he wrote to Aston requesting him to try to find out a female who, under the name of "Elizabeth Friendless," had sent him money as the price of a lottery-ticket, long after he had ceased to have anything to do with such matters. With some difficulty she was traced, and as she turned out to be a poor maid from Sheffield, who had once known Montgomery when she was a Sunday scholar, and had fallen upon this forlorn hope of raising means to help her father, the poet, on returning her money, not only sent her therewith Mrs. Taylor's "Present from a Mistress to a Servant," but accompanied the whole with a letter of good counsels, closing with, "My last advice to you is, never to purchase a lottery-ticket while you live."

It was while Mr. Hodgson and the poet were on a visit to Leamington, in the autumn of this year, that a Bible Society was established at Stratford-on-Avon, and Montgomery gave us the following account of the meeting held for the purpose. We repeat the particulars as nearly as possible in his own words:—"Major

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Stratton,"* said he, "had long felt a determination to form a Bible Society at Stratford. It was necessary, however, to proceed with caution; previously, therefore, to the time of holding the projected public meeting, and lest those who were known to be opposed should gain the day, or those who were indifferent should become enemies, as well as to secure as many friends as possible, that gentleman canvassed the town and its vicinity in person. By this means he either neutralised the greater part of those from whom he had apprehended opposition, or converted them into allies. Either the Major or some of his colleagues having learned that Mr. Hodgson and myself were sojourning in the neighbourhood, our aid was solicited. We readily consented to render what assistance we could, and on the morning appointed proceeded to the place of meeting. On looking into the Corporation Hall, we could perceive no signs of any gathering, with the exception of a few poor people in one corner. We were certainly rather discouraged by this aspect of affairs, as the hour announced for the meeting had passed. From thence we went to the Shakspeare Tavern, where we found the Rev. Edward Burn, of Birmingham, with several members of the committee, and other persons. Mr. Burn lifted up his hands and his eyes in astonishment when he saw *us;* and observed with emphasis, 'Bible Societies are surely admirably adapted to bring together friends from a distance!' Having waited about an hour, we again proceeded to the hall, which we now found pretty well filled with a respectable audience. Major Stratton apologised for the delay which had occurred, and begged the indulgence of a quarter of an hour longer, by which time, he said,

* Of Park Hall.

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he hoped his father-in-law, Mr. D'Ewes, would have arrived, he being very anxious to attend the meeting. Here, again, our patience was put to the test, and I said within myself, who is this Mr. D'Ewes, that he should be deemed of consequence enough to keep such an audience waiting so long for him? Presently, a considerable bustle was observed about the entrance, when the doors unfolded, and a litter, on which was borne a venerable old man, attended by three or four females — his daughters — entered the room. The invalid was closely wrapped in blankets, his head alone being visible. The litter was carried up to the front of the platform, which was elevated a few steps above the floor, and there placed with the old gentleman's face towards the audience. By his side the ladies, each being dressed in white, took their seats. This affecting spectacle more than compensated our loss of time. Mr. D'Ewes* had, it appeared, been confined to his room, through indisposition, nearly four years: but he was determined to be present at the formation of a Bible Society at Stratford-on-Avon, for which purpose he had thus been carried on his couch that morning a distance of four miles, as though he could hardly consent to die until this desire of his heart had been accomplished. When all was adjusted, Major Stratton took the chair: he spoke at first as if he would not occupy five minutes, but when he *had* talked five, he seemed as if he could not give over; and although he occasionally diverged somewhat widely from the main subject, he said an abundance of good things. When he had concluded, there was a movement about the occupant of the couch, and every eye was directed to that quarter; for it had been arranged that he should move the first resolution,

* Bernard D'Ewes, Esq., of Wellsbourne.

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and his attendants were unfolding and raising him up. He had a fair complexion, and there was in his countenance such a mixture of sweetness, simplicity, and gravity, that the child and the patriarch seemed alike present. He read the resolution in a feeble voice, and was evidently himself deeply affected; but his eyes appeared to beam with satisfaction. After saying a few words expressive of the pleasure which he felt on the occasion, and of the hopes he entertained of ultimate good, he sank back on the litter, and there lay in lovely composure. At this moment every breath seemed to be suspended; and amidst a silence which, if it could not be heard, was literally felt, Mr. Burn stepped forward, and after seconding the resolution in a speech of considerable length, concluded by pronouncing, with great solemnity, a blessing on the venerable gentleman, over whom he partly stood, stretching forth his hands, and praying that he might, in the decline of life, experience all the blessings which the Bible alone announced, and when the scenes of life closed upon him, that he might realise all the prospects which it opened to the Christian believer. Again the good old man was raised up, and, after thanking Mr. Burn for his kind wishes, reiterated the benediction on the society just formed, adding, emphatically, *semper floreat*—may it ever flourish! and then resumed his position. At length," proceeded Montgomery, "my turn came to address the meeting. I was deeply affected — as I might well be — with what I had just seen and heard. I recollected the fact and the ground of the world-wide celebrity of the town where we were met; but what a contrast! Here was a scene such as dramatist never drew — the player never acted. I had an elegant picture of Garrick before me, and one of Shakspeare behind me, both painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. I recollected the jubilee of the

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great English poet, when the great English painter presented these pictures to the Corporation, while the great English player recited his memorable ode, amidst the strange idolatrous scenes—for surely such they were—exhibited on that occasion. Contrasting those theatrical displays with the objects and operations of the Bible Society, and knowing how differently even the parties concerned might have acted under the influence of high Christian principles, I felt myself inspired on the subject, in a way which I had never before experienced." *Holland:* "Was there any report of the proceedings published? or does any outline of your address exist?" *Montgomery:* "I believe not. I cannot recollect what I said, but only how I felt, and that the collection after the meeting amounted to 50*l.*: nor have I forgotten that the butler of Mr. D'Ewes*, who had never attended such a meeting before, gave two guineas, and promised to subscribe one annually." *Everett:* "You have alluded to the Stratford revels in your review of Southey's 'Specimens of English Poets.'" *Montgomery:* "I have; the most disgusting exhibitions took place: and had Shakspeare been permitted to rise from the dead, he would have spit in Garrick's face for his fulsome panegyrics."

It need scarcely be added, that Montgomery was neither insensible to the matchless merits of Shakspeare, nor indifferent to the attractions of his birthplace: the former he has discussed in his "Lectures on

* The interesting individual here mentioned was, we believe, nephew to Mrs. Delany, who enjoyed the familiar friendship of King George III. and Queen Charlotte, and a branch of the ancient family of which Sir Simonds D'Ewes, whose curious "Autobiography and Correspondence" were published in 1845, was a member: the book was read with much zest by Montgomery on this account.

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Poetry," and cited in his selections of religious verse: to the latter he made pilgimages from Leamington, both before and after the year when the Bible Society meeting was held. We are not, indeed, aware that "the soft-flowing Avon, by whose silver stream" he wandered on each of those occasions, inspired a single stanza; but a tourist some years later mentions that he saw among other names left as memorials of visits to the house in which Shakspeare was born, that of "James Montgomery, Sheffield, 1820."

He took an active part in the proceedings at the annual meeting of the Sheffield Bible Society, drawing up and reading the report, and afterwards speaking at length, as he had done the year preceding. He attended and spoke on a similar occasion at Bawtry, from whence he went to spend a day at Blythe Hall with Henry Walker, Esq., for whose wife he wrote the stanzas entitled "Thoughts and Images."*

But we must turn to the remembrance of less tranquil matters. Montgomery returned to his editorial avocations at a crisis of more than ordinary outward perplexity.

The present year is distinguished in the history of *Radicalism* by the dispersion of a monster Reform meeting at Manchester by the military. On this memorable occasion the most intense feeling was excited throughout the country, and language correspondingly strong, explicit, and conflicting was used, as well in newspapers as elsewhere. Montgomery, in noticing, as a journalist, this transaction, thought it right to adopt a very guarded tone of expression, not only on account of the inflammatory state of the popular mind at the moment, but likewise from the impossibility of obtain-

* Works, p. 322.

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ing a clear and dispassionate knowledge of the state of the case in all its bearings. This prudent conduct on his part was highly resented by many persons less scrupulous and responsible than himself, who wished him to "*speak out*," as they termed it — that was, to speak *their* sentiments on the subject; and several letters, couched in no very temperate terms, were addressed to him in consequence of his conduct. Referring to some of these, he said:—

"It may be exceedingly heroic of our correspondents, amidst the security of anonymous concealment, to empty their inkstands in atrabilious effusions of censure on the conduct of the Manchester magistrates and yeomanry, and call them 'military executioners,' 'bloodthirsty minions,' and even 'murderers;' but the editor of a newspaper, whatever be his feelings, must be more reserved in the expression of them, as he is responsible not only to the laws of his country for the justification of the language which he may use, but a higher tribunal, from which there is no appeal, either in this world or the next, for the consequence of what he may say; he being so circumstanced, at times, that on a word from him may depend the peace of his neighbourhood, and the lives of his townspeople."

So carefully, and with such Christian circumspection, did he speak and act on this critical occasion.

Indeed, when the remarks which gave so much offence to some of the readers of the "Iris" were published, there was danger — at least there was apprehension — that a public meeting would be held in Sheffield of the same character as that of Manchester, and how it might be conducted, or with what catastrophe it might be terminated, no human sagacity could foresee.* The

* Such a meeting was held in Sheffield on the 25th of October; but it passed over without violence, except in the speeches. The

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editor being determined to keep clear of the blood of all men, spoke of the lamentable affair at Manchester in such terms as pledged him neither to the approval nor the condemnation of those who took upon themselves to collect or to disperse the multitude, or of the seizure of the radical leaders on a charge of high treason. His conduct and forbearance, however, at this juncture, not only exposed him to the rancour of the aggrieved party, but diminished materially the circulation of his paper, by excluding it almost entirely from public-houses, and other resorts of political small-talkers. This tax he nevertheless resolutely and conscientiously paid, believing it to be his paramount duty at such a crisis to pour oil upon the troubled waters.

But the indignation against him presently assumed a more definite and intelligible shape in the announcement of a new newspaper, avowedly for the advocacy of more liberal principles than those of the "Iris." The promoters and supporters of the "Sheffield Independent" had almost to a man once been the friends of Montgomery, who was probably more hurt than surprised by their establishment of a rival journal.* For while it was not to be doubted that he firmly maintained, as he constantly avowed, genuine Whig principles, it was no less true that he had a strong leaning

conciliatory part which the editor of the "Iris" performed at this exciting crisis, probably did something towards saving the town from a riot: and the magistrates thanked him for the timely aid which he had thus rendered them in keeping the peace.

* The first number of the "Sheffield Independent" appeared on the 11th of December: it was heralded by an "Address to the Public," written by Captain Ashe, author of "The Spirit of the Book," &c., and contained "such unmanly and illiberal allusions" to the "Iris" and the "Mercury," that the actual editor of the new newspaper wrote to Montgomery, disclaiming all participation in the vulgar aspersions.

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toward what has since been called *Conservatism* — his feeble sympathy with mob orators great and small — his reluctance to use occasions of social public distress as arguments against the existing government; these faults, and, perhaps still more, his invariable recognition of the duties and doctrines of Christianity even in his leading articles, were but little calculated to suit the tastes or advance the influence of that large and growing class of popular politicians, who were ere long to concede to the Roman Catholics in England their largest "claims;" and to effect such a "Reform in Parliament" as even the most sanguine of the democrats of '92 had hardly dreamt of.

James Montgomery to the Rev. Ignatius Montgomery.

"Sheffield, Nov. 9. 1819.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"Before you receive this, you will have seen, by the direction of the newspaper, that I am at home. I arrived on Wednesday evening last week, improved both in health and strength, though with no excess of either, and in spirits almost as low as ever you saw me at Bristol. The circumstances that surround me at this moment, and that are likely to accompany me for months to come with aggravated vexation, are little calculated to confirm me in well-being or to restore me to well-doing. Party politics during my absence have risen in arms as far as hostilities can be carried on by speaking and writing, and there seems a resurrection of that evil spirit which haunted our houses and our hearts, and made life miserable with envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness in the age of Jacobinism. I, as usual, am exposed to the jealousy, if not the open enmity, of both sides, and the manner in which the 'Iris' was conducted while I was away, as well as the articles which I wrote for it, have roused prejudice and passion, both in radicals and ultra-royalists, to such a pitch against me, that I scarcely know

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which are most offended. The rage of the former against the 'Iris,' and their confidence in their own numbers and talents is so great, that *two* new papers are announced in avowed opposition to mine, even more than to the 'Mercury,' from which they expected no better than they got, and therefore are not disappointed; but my 'pusillanimity or demi-freedom,' to quote the language of one of the new editors, 'is more to be despised than the meanest servility, and the vilest adherence to a system of corruption' in Mr. Todd. One of these journals is to commence the 4th of December, and the other the 1st of January. What may be the issue I cannot conjecture; were I at liberty to consult my own feelings, I should care very little whether they failed or succeeded, even if I were to vanish before them from the public eye as a newspaper editor for ever. I have long lost all love or relish for politics, and am sick at heart of many other things connected with my present most irksome situation: but it is my duty to remain at my post, even if it be a whipping-post, till I have a stronger plea for retiring than I can urge at present. . . . .

"Your affectionate brother,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. Ignatius Montgomery."

The leading article of the "Iris" of December 7th is not only a brilliant specimen of the popular style of the editor, but is a nervous and accurate delineation of that remarkable class of men *amongst* which it was his own lot to be nurtured on his introduction to Sheffield, but *from out* of which he had long been in various ways loosened or separated:—

"Great opportunities make great men. In the unwrought quarries of the human mind there is always wealth of intellect to meet the exigence of every occasion; but Nature, economical in all her operations, seldom lavishes her richer treasures in the ordinary course of affairs. In troublous and eventful periods alone, the full force of virtue or vice, and

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of genius and knowledge, allied with the one or the other of these, can be known and attested. At the time in question (especially between the years 1790 and 1797), when almost every man, woman, and child in the kingdom that had the use of reason (as well as of some that had not) were politicians, the intense and continual excitement of the *most violent passions* caused such a conflict of minds, such energy, activity, and discipline of the *highest powers* of the human soul, as had never been exhibited since Britain was an island.

"This might be illustrated by the unparalleled ardour of enterprise displayed, not in politics only, but in almost every walk of literature and art, by men who in a duller age might have lived their hour and died for ever, but who in that awakening era secured to themselves an earthly immortality—a few years of posthumous renown among the sons of science and of song.

"But, however politicians of rank and education may have had their powers expanded by the interest which they took in events that raised men above themselves in proportion as they were personally engaged in them, it was among the lower classes that the most conspicuous changes were wrought to bring man out of the marble of himself, and present him as distinct from the unintelligent mass in which he had been embedded, as the statue from the rock out of which it has been hewn. Those who have had the opportunity of mingling in the popular assemblies of that day, or conversing, at the anvil, the loom, or the fireside, with the master spirits of the multitude, must remember with regret, what they often witnessed with astonishment, —the exuberance of thought, versatility of talent, command of language, and magnanimity of sentiment (rude as it was, and warm from the heart), by which many in the humblest stations distinguished themselves from the common herd. Poverty and ignorance are levelling circumstances; the one is the Frigid Zone of society, the other the Dead Sea of the mind; the growth of intellect is stunted under the withering influence of the first, and either absolutely blighted by

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the thick vapours that hang perpetually over the second, or, if fruits fair to the eye be sometimes produced, they turn into ashes when tasted.

"An event of sufficient magnitude to make the lowest person in the State feel that his place may be changed by it, and if *changed, raised,* calls into exercise the whole feeling, reasoning, and acting powers of man. And such an event was the French Revolution, not at home only, but more or less wherever its electric convulsions were communicated. In England, therefore, where every body was in motion, — all thinking for themselves, and each eagerly hoping or resolutely struggling to mend his condition, — the natural buoyancy of talent bore up its few fortunate possessors, and set them merrily afloat on that turbulent tide, in which many were floundering and half drowning in the depths, more were weltering in the shallows, and the majority only stirring from the bottom of the mud, out of which it was impossible to extricate themselves.

"On this proud occasion, the native nobility of genius, which (often unconsciously and oftener unobservedly) displays itself whenever opportunity occurs, marked the characters of some who may yet be remembered, even in this town, for heroes, philosophers, and statesmen, had their stars been propitious. All at once, it may be said, they were seen emerging from the crowd, among whom they stood, like Saul before Samuel, taller *by the head* than their brethren. But their morals, their habits, their circumstances, there is reason to fear, were not benefited by the disclosure of faculties within them, superior to the station in which they were born; nay, their better endowments in some instances became a snare to them, and the popularity which they had acquired without effort cost the happiness of their lives to maintain! The promiscuous fraternity of all classes as fellow-members of political clubs, in that age of liberty and equality, was more calculated to debase the virtuous than to amend the profligate. In times of public commotion, the worst men love to attach themselves to the best cause, which sooner or later they disgrace, and bring down upon their

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honest associates the infamy due to themselves alone. 'O Liberty!' exclaimed Madame Roland, as she passed the temple of that revolutionary goddess, on her way from the dungeon to the guillotine, — 'O Liberty! what crimes are committed in thy name!' And so it was in England, though incomparably less so in degree; the familiarity of intercourse with grosser beings brought down to the level of the latter those whose abilities had given them pre-eminence and authority among their former acquaintance. Of some, whom we have in our eye, not one survives. Most of them died in poverty, more wretched than that in which their genius — their evil genius — found them; broken-hearted and hopeless, they left their families as destitute as they found themselves in their last moments; and their children, if they died not prematurely, are to be sought in the thickest ranks of that plebeian throng, out of which their fathers had started as prophets and patriarchs.

> " 'And yet the light that led astray
> Was light from heaven.'

" When *such* light becomes darkness, how great must that darkness be! And these were the *favoured few* among the thousands and myriads of far inferior minds in the same unprivileged state who troubled themselves for the public good. It is very questionable whether one of all these thousands and myriads ever benefited himself or the nation with all that he ever did, or said, or thought, out of his own sphere of humble usefulness."

In the two following numbers of the " Iris" (December 14th and 21st) he resumes the subject; and passing from the Jacobinism of 1795 to the Radicalism of 1819, exposes the wickedness, the weakness, and the folly of the latter spirit in a manner worthy of an enlightened politician and Christian patriot. These papers — two of the most interesting and elaborate probably ever

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produced by him — are too long for quotation, and too characteristic for abridgment. The following is a striking passage: —

"There exists not in history a record of either *Reform* or *Revolution* having been accomplished in the government of any civilised country since the world began by *the people alone*, — meaning by *the people* those who from their situation must 'eat bread in the sweat of their brow.' We affirm this as *a fact*, which, if false, may be easily refuted: but, assuming it, for argument's sake, to be true that the people alone (including all the sober, intelligent, honest, and industrious, as well as the counterparts of all these) can neither amend nor overturn any state of which they are subjects, unless they are united with a great proportion of the classes above them, and altogether under the direction of men of higher attainments and consideration than themselves, it follows of necessity that *the rabble*, the lowest, most ignorant, and profligate of mankind, under ringleaders as low and as profligate, though perhaps not quite so ignorant, as themselves, *can do nothing but mischief*, and even *that* not effectually; since, for want of intellectual power and the principle of consistency, they can no more revolutionise than they can reform."

"The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece!"—to adopt the emphatical iteration of Lord Byron—from the very period of their subjugation to Turkish influence, had excited the sympathy of Christendom, and called forth patriotic wishes, at least, from all who have ever read or heard of their glory and their degradation; and even their contemplated delivery from Ottoman bondage, which now engaged public attention, was not new. Pierre de Ronsard, one of the early French poets, had exhorted Charles IX. to the glory of this enterprise: —

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"Bref cette Grèce, oeil du monde habitable,
Qui n'eut jamais n'y aura de semblable,
Pour de son col desserrer le lien,
Lien barbare, impitoyable et rude."

"Grecia, the world's fair light, that on this earth
Ne'er had, nor e'er will have, her like in worth,
Demands thine arm of Christian majesty,
To set her neck from this base bondage free."

Montgomery, if less enthusiastic in his expectation of renovated independence for Greece than many others, was not less interested in her prospects of delivery from oppression. In the course of the present year, "the little territory of PARGA, on the western coast of what *once was Greece*, but *now is Turkey*,"—to use his own words,—was ceded by the Congress of Vienna to Ali Pacha, one of the most savage and rapacious vassals of the Sublime Porte. The Parguinotes were allowed to remove to Corfu, or any of the adjacent islands: before they embarked, they gathered from churches and sepulchres the bones of their ancestors, and burnt them in one immense pyre in the market-place. When the Turks entered the city, they found it a desert; the only sign of life that remained being the expiring embers of the funeral pile, on which the fugitives had consumed the relics of their forefathers. "The whole history of the late war," adds Montgomery, "through its infinity of evils, affords not a theme for poetry comparable to this. There is a living poet, and only one, equal to such an argument; if Lord Byron, who resides on the adjacent shores, does not catch inspiration from this martyrdom of the dead, he will almost deserve to forfeit his genius and his fame." It was soon afterwards reported in different journals that the noble poet had undertaken and completed a poem on

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this subject, and which he had placed in the hands of a learned native, in order that a Greek translation might precede the English version. The report was unfounded; and appears to have originated in the proposal of a prize offered at Bologna for the best epic poem on the subject. The prize was said to be a silver urn, with classic ornaments, bearing the following inscription from Virgil:—

> "Nos patriæ fines et dulcia linquimus arva;
> Nos patriam fugimus."

How soon, how inseparably, by life and death, the name and fame of Lord Byron were to be identified with Athenian struggles for liberty, was as little foreseen at the moment when the foregoing speculations appeared, as the subsequent elevation of the Bavarian Prince Otho to the throne of Greece, as a new European sovereignty, could then have been anticipated.

A mezzotinto portrait of Montgomery was published this year, from one in crayons by John Raphael Smith*, at that time in the possession of Mr. Rhodes: the print, although finely executed, and faithful to the drawing, was not considered a good likeness, inasmuch as it represented our friend as more plump and bulky than he was.

* Smith was a mezzotint engraver, as well as a portrait painter: "He was," says Mr. Rhodes, "one of the first to perceive and appreciate the genius of Chantrey: he afterwards took pleasure in giving him instructions; and some years afterwards, the pupil, having become a proficient in art, perpetuated the recollection of his master in one of the finest busts that ever came from his hands." — *Peak Scenery*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 15.

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CHAP. XLVIII.

1820.

LAW OF LIBEL, AND STAMP DUTIES. — DEATH OF GEORGE III, AND DUKE OF KENT. — HYMN ON THE KING'S INTERMENT. — SHEFFIELD BURNS' COMMEMORATION SOCIETY. — MONTGOMERY'S VERSES AND SPEECH. — THE STUFF SYSTEM. — MONTGOMERY'S OPPOSITION TO IT. — INSOLENT AND COWARDLY NOTE FROM A "STUFFER." — DR. CLARKE'S COMPLIMENT TO THE POET. — INVITATION TO WATH. — LETTER TO REV. J. EVERETT. — QUEEN CAROLINE. — MONTGOMERY AT WHITBY. — CAPTAIN COOKE. — CONVERSATION. — ASKING A BLESSING AT TEA. — VISIT AND "JOURNAL" AT SCARBRO.' — INCIDENT THERE. — THE "VOYAGE OF THE BLIND." — JOHN EDWARDS. — LETTER TO HIM. — A "BRIDAL BENISON," &C. — EPITAPH.

VERY important alterations in the law of libel, and still more in the stamp duties, engaged the attention of Parliament at this period. The bill embodying the new regulations on the latter subject — seriously affecting as it did all the publishers of newspapers — was suffered to pass almost without any formal remonstrance from the powerful, but divided, parties whom it was intended and calculated to affect. By one of the clauses — at this moment in operation — the publisher of a newspaper is required to give a guarantee in the form of a money-bond, to be enforced if any matter printed by him should be adjudged libellous.

"If it were possible," wrote Montgomery*, "for men to deserve punishment for doing nothing, most assuredly the

* Iris, January 11.

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newspaper editors have contrived to deserve it by *doing nothing* to oppose this unprecedented clause in its progress through Parliament. The booksellers made a noble stand against the Libel Bill, and its penalties were considerably mitigated in consequence: but our motley tribe, as if they had neither common interest nor common feelings, took not a step in the way of petitioning against the ignominious stigma with which they are henceforth to be distinguished as *hypothetical* culprits. . . . . Newspaper proprietors, publishers, and editors have disgraced the press by their 'non-resistance' on this occasion, and have shown themselves (in the bulk at least) almost prepared for 'passive obedience,' should Lord Castlereagh, having made them give security in advance, propose at the next meeting of Parliament to banish them in advance also."

On the 1st of February the "Iris," in a mourning border, announced the demise of two royal personages, — the Duke of Kent and King George III. Montgomery was preparing an article for his columns in reference to the unexpected death of the duke, and had written the following sentence, when intelligence arrived of the peaceful departure of his revered and long-afflicted sovereign: — "Amidst the alarm which every new instance of havoc in his large family creates, the eyes of the nation are turned anxiously towards him who yet survives, like the British oak, scathed indeed at top, and yielding to decay below, but still unbroken. '*The king! God bless him!*' is the instinctive ejaculation of every honest man at the remembrance of one so desolate, and withal so aged, that if he has not outlived his enemies, he seems to have outlived their enmity!" At the moment when Montgomery wrote these words, the king was dead!

Silence, as he afterwards remarked, was the natural expression of that awful and overwhelming sensation

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with which such tidings must be received in the first instance by every mind that is not perverted in its best feelings. He laid down his pen, and resigned himself to thought for a few moments, but had not the heart to take it up again till the week following, when he eloquently enforced the lesson of mortality which the event was calculated to teach: —

"Three years ago," said he, "if the lots of life had been cast among the royal family, in the presence of their people, it might have been presumed, upon ordinary computation, that his majesty would have drawn the shortest; for the battle with Time and Death went sore against him, and the archers hit him: 'the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmities—but a wounded spirit who can bear?' On the other hand, the Duke of Kent, standing in the midst of the king's sons, between the eldest and the youngest (the fourth among seven), in the vigour of manhood, and redeeming the time by well-regulated habits of life, might have been expected to draw the longest date. Yet three of the royal lineage have been taken away before either of these (the Princess Charlotte, her child, and the Queen); and he of the two, for whom the multitude of years might have been anticipated, in his fall has preceded him whose house of clay was so frail that it seemed liable every instant to be 'crushed before the moth.'" *

Reflections founded on the Horatian truism: —

"Pallida Mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres" —

occupied the pen of our editor, in common with those of every member of his fraternity throughout the kingdom, in the following week: —

* Iris, Feb. 8.

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"To-morrow," said he ("Iris," Feb. 21.), "our late sovereign will follow his son to that place where *four* generations of his family, including *five* of the nearest degrees of kin that can exist in human society, will then repose together, all cut off within little more than two years. He indeed has been so long estranged from the eyes of his people, that as an object of sight he will never again be missed, but, as an object of melancholy and affectionate sympathy and veneration, a great change of feeling must take place in their bosoms when his name is remembered among them. In the Chinese halls of justice, we are told by Sir George Staunton, there is a recess at the back of the seat of the magistrates, concealed by a curtain, behind which the invisible presence of the emperor is presumed to reside, that those who execute the laws, and those who are the subjects of them, may act and submit as if the sovereign in person were hearing and adjudging causes in his own courts. The majesty of England has long been an invisible presence, not only in his own palace, but in the senate, the city, the halls of justice, the church, the family-circle, and wherever the sanction of his authority was requisite for the administration of public affairs. Meanwhile, all things have been done in his name, and with a reverential regard to what was imagined might be agreeable to his decisions, were he again to break forth in his own character. He has been like the Roman heroes amidst the ruins of the Capitol and Coliseum, whom the poet, if we quote correctly, calls —

> "'The dead, but sceptred, sovereigns of the world,
> That rule our spirits from their urns.'

The veil that hid him has at length been drawn aside by the hand of death, — an empty space alone remains; for he who was secreted behind it has for ever disappeared. *How* he lived, and *what* were his sorrows or his consolations, placed as he was on a dark isthmus between his former life while reason lasted, and the sudden resurrection of intellect in his soul after death in a new state of existence, it is in

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vain to speculate. *He is gone.* In his long course our late monarch survived nearly three successions of the inhabitants of the whole earth; it is probable that three thousand millions of beings like himself have passed into eternity, and as many have sprung to light, between his birth and dissolution. Judging by what has occurred in his time, the heart sickens at the thought of how much the race of man has to suffer before an equal period to come shall have expired; but judging, on the other hand, by what has been done in his day for the best interests of our species, the heart revives at the prospect of a happier age now commencing than has been known since the fall of Adam. *He is gone.* For himself, we believe that George III. is at rest; not so much because more prayers — and prayers of faith too — have been offered up for him, perhaps, than ever were offered up for an individual since the world began, as because he was himself a man of prayer and of faith; for, whatever may be said of their conduct in subsequent years, he was in his family, while they were about his person, what the patriarch was, of whom the Lord thus testified — 'I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.'"

On the day on which the royal funeral took place, Montgomery attended divine service in the morning, in common with Christians of all denominations. In the afternoon he went to the Lancasterian School, and, in concert with several other gentlemen, addressed the assembled children on the striking instances of mortality which had recently taken place in the royal family of England. Two hymns, one composed by himself, for the use of the children on this occasion, and having especial reference to the interest his late Majesty was known to have taken in the education of the poor, were sung: —

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"The Father of our school is dead:
We humbly trust, from suffering fled,
His ransomed spirit bows, and brings
New homage to the King of kings.

"A richer diadem he wears,
A palm of nobler victory bears,
And fills in heaven a brighter throne,
Than those he called on earth his own.

"His WISH our tongues delight to tell;
We loved the lips from which it fell:—
'*May each* POOR CHILD *throughout the land*
His BIBLE *read and understand!*'

"That wish was not a breath of air;
It was our good old monarch's PRAYER,
And brought a greater blessing down
On helpless thousands than his crown.

"God's Holy Word thus taught to know,
May we in years and wisdom grow,
Till all shall life eternal gain,
And with our king in glory reign!"

A number of Scotchmen residing in Sheffield, having formed a convivial society in the name of their countryman Robert Burns, resolved to dine together annually on his birthday, January 25th. They were naturally solicitous to have the company of Montgomery *, — a compliment, or act of compliance, from

* A "Burns' Club" was formed at Dumfries by a party who met to celebrate the poet's birthday, on the 25th of January, 1819; and at their next anniversary they formally inaugurated the society by the use of an appropriate symbol, viz. "A china punch-bowl, with elegant emblematic devices, and capable of holding three gallons!" Scott, Campbell, Moore, Montgomery, Allan Cunningham, &c., were elected honorary members; but we are not aware that any one of these gentlemen were ever present at the symposia of this "club of good fellows."

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which he was equally anxious to escape; lest this might expose him, on the one hand, to the charge of countenancing a design of which he could not altogether approve, or, on the other hand, lest he might be constrained to avow something like disapprobation, which he hardly felt himself called upon to do if he could avoid being present on this occasion. He therefore felt glad that a call from home spared him the unpleasant alternative of accepting or declining the invitation in the first instance. At the solicitation, however, of the men in his printing-office (mostly Scotchmen), he wrote the spirited verses entitled "Robert Burns,"* which he allowed to be handsomely and gratuitously printed on a sheet as a compliment to the genius of the Ayrshire bard. The intelligence of the death of the king, however, not only postponed the intended meeting to the 8th of March, but secured the attendance of Montgomery at the dinner table, with his countrymen, on which occasion he addressed them with great spirit and interest. The substance of the former part of his speech, as it had reference to his own personal history, has been made use of elsewhere; the latter part related in a peculiar manner to the enterprising and migratory spirit which is so characteristic of the Scotch generally.

"Probably," said he, "the people of no other civilised nation (and both in moral and intellectual cultivation Scotland ranks among the most exalted) emigrate so frequently to seek their fortunes in foreign climes. This circumstance has become a theme of vulgar and unmerited sarcasm in England; but even the persons who are mean-spirited enough to taunt their neighbours with this incidental disposition to settle abroad (the causes of which lie out of the

* Works, p. 316.

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sight of ordinary observers) can bear witness of the fact, that a Scotchman is never ashamed of his country, unless he has been guilty of something for which his country would be ashamed of him: but though, in every region under the sun visited at all by Europeans, it is probable that emigrants from Caledonia might be found, it would not be found that *anywhere* a true Scotchman had forsaken his country, for *everywhere* he carries his country with him in his heart; his dearest thoughts always dwell at the home of his youth, and are associated with the land of his fathers. Of these he is reminded continually, and most delightfully, by the poetry which has been familiar to him from a child. Scotland, indeed, from time immemorial, has been a land of poets. No country, perhaps, can boast of so much *unappropriated* verse as Scotland. How many pieces of this kind, of dates that cannot be traced, and belonging to names long lost in oblivion, are preserved by tradition among the peasantry, or have been collected into miscellanies, — fragments so precious, that though

"'All but the song hath passed away,'

they would add lustre to the fame of any bard to whom they could be assigned, or might singly have given immortality to their authors, had time spared a record of the existence of men the fruits of whose genius are imperishable, and whose reliques have become the unclaimed inheritance of their country alone! Through these, the *love of country* burns with inextinguishable ardour; and their influence upon the imagination, the affections, and the intellect of the Scottish people, from their infancy accustomed to the imagery and sentiments of their national songs, lies far too deep, and extends too wide, to be fully pursued and apprehended."

Until the publication of this speech, comparatively few of Montgomery's townspeople were aware of his Scottish origin.

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There were at this period few persons in Sheffield upon whom the poor relied with more confidence for advice and sympathy, nor with whom his wealthier fellow-townsmen more willingly conferred or co-operated on matters of local advantage. This disposition sometimes involved him in tedious and unpleasant, as well as thankless, negotiations. At the beginning, and during the first quarter, of the present year, he was distracted and weighed down, by voluntary implication, in affairs of this sort. Sheffield was suffering severely from two causes; it suffered, in common with the whole kingdom, from the general depression of trade; while the *poor-rates* were becoming intolerable or ruinous to many of those who were called upon to pay them: but besides this, the town groaned under a peculiar evil — the practice adopted by many master-manufacturers of paying their workmen's wages, partly, or principally, and in some instances entirely, with *stuff* instead of money. The extent and enormity of this system can only be comprehended by persons who became acquainted with the many exposures to which its abettors were subject during this year, — exposures, which it would neither be possible nor proper to detail here. Suffice it to observe, that, differing from a few good, and from a host of interested, men, Montgomery was a decided and uncompromising opponent of this delusive, degrading, unjust, and oppressive system.

He had been appointed, at a public meeting, in conjunction with four other individuals, to prepare the outline of a plan for the relief of the distressed workmen. At a subsequent meeting, held at the town hall, a scheme embodied in certain resolutions was submitted by them; and Montgomery introduced the business with the following words:—

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"A slight review of the state of the Sheffield trade at this time may be expected from the person who introduces the subject of these resolutions. From me such a review must be very imperfect: I have neither intellect to comprehend the whole of the melancholy details, memory to recall what I *do* comprehend, nor heart to express in the presence of this assembly of my suffering townspeople what I *can* remember. I will notice a few circumstances only."

He then entered into a long, luminous, and energetic *exposé* of the evils under which the town laboured, and of the plan of alleviation which was proposed. Among other topics, he adverted to the *stuff system*:—

"On this delicate subject I shall touch tenderly and briefly. It is most desirable that heartburnings should be repressed, and grievances no further exposed than is unavoidable on the present occasion, when all parties are met to plan measures for mutual advantage. I must, however, say, that on this subject my mind is decidedly made up; and so far as the stuff system is practised between the manufacturer and his workman, I think it is the greatest evil under which the town is suffering,—the depression of trade itself not excepted; it is an evil which has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished; and could this meeting hasten the extinction of a traffic so mischievous, as well as illegal, a bad trade might be endured with patience a little longer. With respect to barter between the merchant and manufacturer, I shall only remark that there is one objection against it which has never been answered, or even attempted to be answered, by its advocates; it is a retrogression towards barbarism; a recurrence to the first, the rudest, and the most imperfect principles of commerce: the savage barters skins for food with his brother savage; the Spaniard barters beads and bits of iron with the wild Indian for his gold and silver; and each, after the exchange, thinks that he has outwitted the other, which it is the very essence of barter to effect, the commodities of neither party being of ascertained value. For this very reason, in civilised countries barter is

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almost entirely exploded, and the more simple, convenient, and honourable mode of traffic, by the help of money of a known standard, substituted."

In concluding, as he thought, in his newspaper (April 4.), the controversy which had so long existed respecting these perplexing town affairs, he took occasion, in connection with some remarks on the "absurdity" and "imposture" "of a system which authorised the substitution of stuff for wages," to add —

"We will not enter into the argument here, when there is no adversary in the field; but should ever an advocate appear for this mode of making 'the ephah small, and the shekel great, of buying the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes,' we pledge ourselves to meet him on any ground which he himself shall choose. The writer of this paragraph threw down the gauntlet, at the Town Hall, in the face of hundreds of the actors or sufferers in the stuff system, and not one took it up. Till the challenge shall be accepted, and he is beaten out of the field, he has a right to affirm, as he did on that occasion, in the memorable parliamentary phraseology, that this is an evil 'which has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished.' The remedy is in our own hands. Let an association be formed for the purpose of prosecuting all such authenticated cases of stuffing as shall occur hereafter, without any respect of persons."

This spirited notification — practicable and unwelcome enough, certainly — exasperated the "stuffers" beyond endurance, and exposed Montgomery, personally, to such insults as misjudging self-interest could alone have originated. The week after its publication he received a copy of his own newspaper containing it, enclosed in a letter which was thus worded: —

"*Mr. Editor. — Sir,—*

"*I return your* STUFF, *being much inferior to any*

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yet paid for wages; it neither clothes the back, feeds the belly, nor keeps the feet dry, being by far the best calculated to inflame the heads of the poor, and sow the seeds of discord and discontent amongst workmen and their masters. Suppose you, Mr. Editor, had furnished me or a number of your workmen, their wives, and children, with suitable clothing (AT THEIR OWN REQUEST) *against the present Easter, to the amount of from 3l. to 7l. each, in what manner would you expect to be paid? at once, by instalments, or not at all? Be careful, sir (you have thrown down the* 'GAUNTLET'): *you are doing more mischief than you may ever have it in your power to remedy whilst you live.*"

Montgomery was just ready to leave home for Liverpool, when he received this inculpatory letter. The very act of preparing for a journey always produced in him a degree of irritation; and the effect upon his nervous system for some minutes after the receipt of this document was really distressing to those about him. But in a short time his mental perturbation subsided, and he introduced a clever and ingenuous reply, with these words: —

"This [the letter above] is a pretty fair specimen of the temper and arguments with which the objections against the *stuff system* are met by those who are interested in its continuance, or from early habits and narrow notions are prejudiced in its favour. We are quite willing to allow our correspondent's first assertion, and if he pleases to have it so, the 'Iris' *shall* be *stuff*, much inferior to any yet paid in wages; but this ought to be a recommendation of it to an advocate of the practice; for, as far as we have ever been able to learn, when goods are substituted for money in wages, the worse they are the better; and we do humbly propose, that, in future, large quantities of the 'Iris' be purchased for circulation in this way, which would greatly increase the revenue, and reconcile, if anything could, the Editor to the business."

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Legislative interference has mostly put an end to a system which does, nevertheless, sometimes even yet find an advocate in practice if not in argument.

During the month of April he visited Liverpool, by invitation, to assist at a Methodist Missionary Meeting at which Dr. Adam Clarke presided. That learned Wesleyan minister cherished a friendly affection for Montgomery, while he entertained a high opinion of his talents. The bard on this occasion made a long and animated speech; retiring to his seat with some words of apology to the audience and to the Chairman, for having, as he supposed, trespassed upon their time and patience. Dr. Clarke, on rising to submit the motion which Montgomery had moved, said, "You have apologised, sir; — I am sure no apology was necessary; for myself, I would say, in the words of the poet, —

> 'Talk ever thus: for I
> Could listen to thee, till attention faint
> In heedless ecstasy.'"

On another occasion, Dr. Clarke, having occasion to refer to the author of the "Joy of Grief," when citing a passage from that poem, in the pulpit, prefaced his observation with — "The person I refer to is Mr. Montgomery, of Sheffield, — a man, whose name ought never to be mentioned but with the deepest respect for his genius and his piety."

Having last year made a conditional promise to attend the missionary meeting at Wath this spring, he received a pressing invitation from Mr. Wright to gratify his old friends at that place by appearing among them as a missionary advocate. His note of reply lies before us: —

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"Sheffield, May 2. 1820.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am grieved to say that it is not in my power to fulfil my conditional promise to attend the Wath Missionary Meeting this year. I am prevented from making any exertion of voice by a bad cold and cough, accompanied with much occasional inflammation of the chest. I am thus disappointed of participating in the joy of three missionary meetings this very week, all of which I should have endeavoured, according to engagements expressed or understood, to attend. Should I be spared another year, and permitted in the course of Providence, I shall be happy to redeem my pledge to you at Wath. With best wishes and prayers for your meeting, that the Lord may bless it, and make it a blessing to the heathen,

"I am truly,

"Your friend and servant,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"P.S.—I only make one reserve beside what I have mentioned for next year;—I will endeavour to visit Wath, if I am not necessarily from home at the time.

"Mr. Wright, Wath, near Rotherham."

James Montgomery to the Rev. James Everett.

"'Iris' Office, May 23. 1820.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"I send you Southey's 'Life of Wesley,' which Miss Gales had procured for Mr. Holy, to whom I understand it is to be transmitted by you. I enclose a very pretty scrap of handwriting, which, however, is of some value. It is merely the address of a lady, given to me by the late Mr. H. Bowdler, jun., an admirable young man cut off in the full blossom of hope to himself and promise to the world and the Church, being not less happily circumstanced with regard to connections and prospects than he was distinguished for talents and piety, and a zeal to turn all to the

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glory of God and the good of mankind. Two volumes of miscellanies in prose and verse, worthy of his memory, have been published since his death. I found the enclosed impression of a fine seal bearing Wesley's head among some papers and trinkets, which had long been mislaid, and were suddenly found this morning. If it is worth no more to you than a glance of the eye, you may afterwards throw it into the fire.

"I am very truly, your friend and servant,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. James Everett."

The memorable trial of Queen Caroline was now going forward, and the conductors of the press were deluging the kingdom with arguments and disclosures, a tithe of which under ordinary circumstances, and with reference to ordinary individuals, would have been enough to have caused the expulsion of any newspaper which should have ventured to report them, from any virtuous and well-ordered family.

Montgomery was sorely tried with this business; he was not willing to break up his paper; nor could he look with complacency upon the desertion of his readers, merely because he could not consent to pollute his columns with that virus of indelicacy which appeared for the moment to have infected all ranks of society. In the "Iris" of August 29., after a long extract from the report of the Queen's trial, he observes:—

"We have given *all that we durst not withhold;* for such is the state of the public mind on this fearful examination, so jealous and keen is the curiosity excited, that it would be at the peril of any editor, whatever his sentiments respecting the parties, or his feelings as a man might be, if he were not to make his paper as perniciously interesting as his con-

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science would let him. Conscience, indeed! — we scarcely venture to whisper the word, lest we should awaken ours into wrath, which we have no courage to encounter, for having promulgated even these imperfect outlines, and divested of their grosser features and meretricious colouring the facts or falsehoods, whichever they be, that have been exhibited against the Queen of England."

At length the bill of pains and penalties against the Queen was abandoned; and then the fervour of that portion of the popular feeling, which had long been growing more and more intense, immediately took fire and blazed out. Illumination is the old English mode of manifesting national joy; and on this occasion several of the inhabitants of Sheffield, having determined to light up their windows on a given evening, resolved also to invite their fellow townspeople to imitate their example; accordingly, two individuals waited upon Montgomery with the copy of a handbill to that effect, and although he utterly disapproved of the measure, yet, as recognising the "freedom of the press," he at once agreed to print it. Just when the placard was ready to be issued, he learned that threatening letters had been received by a respectable party, intimating that, unless he tacitly recanted certain expressions alleged to have been uttered by him on the question of the Queen's conduct, by lighting up his premises, he must be prepared to take the consequences. Immediately on learning this, Montgomery resolved to suppress the bill, which, however, appeared on the following morning from another printing-office; and on Monday evening, Nov. 21., the illumination took place. Considerable curiosity was excited, and some anxiety manifested respecting the "Iris" Office. It exhibited in the windows *a few candles*, much to the entertainment of one, though little to the satisfaction of either of the parties

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in conflict. On the following day he gave, in the newspaper, an ample explanation of his conduct; and after mentioning the fears and the anticipations of others, he observed: —

"For ourselves, we will not dissemble the plain truth, that from the first announcement, we determined to conform to the will and pleasure of the ruling power. There are three sovereigns in this country,—the king, the queen, and the people; the latter were the lawgivers last night; and they, having taken up the cause of *Her* Majesty as if she were *their* wife instead of *His* Majesty's, we lighted up our premises because we durst not do otherwise. It is a happy thing for England that this third sovereign only reigns once or twice for three or four hours in the course of seven years; yet if despotism were always as moderately exercised as it was last night it would not appear so terrible as it generally does. We have thus ingenuously confessed our alarms, and with equal frankness we confess that they proved to be vain; but yet we *had* reasons for them which have shaken a stouter hand than that which pens this paragraph."

So much was the mind of Montgomery pained and his feelings harassed by the discharge of what he considered duties to the public and to his own conscience at this crisis, that he resolved immediately to discontinue the publication of the "Iris" altogether, and live as well as he could on his very small income. This resolution was not carried into effect in consequence of the representation of the Misses Gales, that the breaking up and sale of effects in the printing-office would disturb their sister, who was then on her death-bed in another part of the premises in the Hartshead.

In September, Montgomery attended a Bible meeting at Whitby; and stayed one night and part of two days at the house of R. Campion, Esq.

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"I scarcely ever felt so low in my life," said he, "and the hills around me were calculated to produce nothing in me but an increase of melancholy and mental depression. I was very hypochondriacal at that time; the road into the town is a descending one; and the scene appeared to grow deeper and darker as I proceeded: I went round and round the place, feeling somewhat like a man going to be executed. Yet abstracted from the idea of dreariness in the hills around, when you look into some parts of the neighbourhood it is delightful; for almost every little glen has its village, its church, and its trees, and these appear peeping out upon you like little paradises."

At the meeting, Montgomery made some very spirited and appropriate remarks on the life and adventures of Captain Cook, not far from whose place of nativity he was then speaking; especially he described him as having been, under God, the pioneer of the Gospel to the islands of the Southern Ocean. A relative of the great navigator was in the congregation, who afterwards said he could with difficulty refrain from flying to embrace the poet during some parts of his address. *Everett:* "Did you know, sir, that a grandson of Captain Cook was in the meeting when you made your remarks?" *Montgomery:* "No; but I heard afterwards that some of his friends were there; and it was very well I did not happen to say anything to offend them; for much as there was justly to applaud in the nautical skill and enterprising character of Cook, there was, I fear, much that is reprehensible when his conduct is compared with the doctrines and morality of the Bible." *Everett:* "There is an anecdote of some interest connected with his early life, which the father of the Rev. R. Newton had from the party concerned: — Young Cook was bound apprentice to an individual in a retail shop near Whitby. The

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master one day happened to throw a new shilling into the money-drawer: during his absence the boy, struck with the beauty of the coin, took it out, substituting one of his own for it. His master, on finding it gone, taxed the apprentice with theft: a plain assertion, that he had replaced it by another shilling, not obtaining credit, his proud mind could not brook the imputation, and he immediately betook himself to sea; so that the changing of that shilling as certainly produced the voyages round the world as the mother's kiss, as West used to relate, made *him* a painter." *Montgomery:* "My companion was the Rev. George Smith, a plain, but zealous, Methodist preacher. We left Whitby, and proceeded over the dreadful moor to Pickering, where we attended a Bible meeting, in the Friends' Meeting House, which is a very handsome place. The Rev. Mr. Gray, a truly pious man, and son of Mr. Gray, of York, took us to sleep at his house, about five miles from Pickering. At tea I saw Mr. Smith's integrity put to the test; our cups were filled, the cake was handed to us, and we were about to commence eating, when the good Methodist, not seeing that any one was likely to say grace (this not being common with some persons at *tea* table), unable to restrain himself any longer, rose up, and in a very solemn, though somewhat startling manner, asked a blessing on our meal. From thence we proceeded to another Bible meeting at Malton, where we took up our quarters for the night with a Quaker family. Here, again, we had no spoken 'grace,' but a solemn pause before the meal, as is usual with the Friends; — George had evidently enough to do to restrain himself. In the morning, however, the Bible was placed before us, with 'If thee hast anything to say to us, thou art at liberty.' We opened at John viii., my companion and

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myself, in turn, lecturing on the various incidents contained in the chapter; after which the worthy Friend set us forward to York in his gig."

On the 12th of September Montgomery left home for Scarborough, during his sojourn at which place of about a month he kept a sort of *Journal* of his employment and adventures, ample extracts from which appeared several years afterwards in "Prose by a Poet," vol. ii. p. 12—84. Among the earlier paragraphs relating to his progress from Sheffield to Doncaster, occurs the graphic notice of Conisborough Castle, which Mr. Hunter has transferred into his topography of "South Yorkshire:" it is one of the very rare instances in which our poet has expressly described the much admired local scenery of his own neighbourhood, either in prose or verse — if indeed his works can be said to present any indisputable example of the latter.

It was during this visit to Scarborough that the following whimsical incident — which is *not* given in the Extracts — occurred. He had become acquainted with a pleasant gentleman and his very intelligent wife, who, like himself, were sojourning at Scarborough. On the day before they took their departure, the poet wished to bid them farewell. His passage to their apartments lay through the public room, in which at that time there was assembled a large mixed company. He made his way through this multitude without appearing to notice any one, hanging down his head, as if — to use his own expression — he had either been or was going into mischief. He directed his steps to a passage which led to a number of private rooms; with these he was a good deal bewildered: at length, he came to a door which he thought led to the parlour of the persons of whom he was in quest. He knocked;

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and a female from within, and in a shrill tone of voice, asked "Who's there?" Montgomery presently found that the voice was not that of the lady whom he sought. He went to another door; rapped, and somebody replied, "Step in." Montgomery did so, in the hope that he was right at last, when the lady, seeing a strange gentleman enter her room, exclaimed "Good God! what has brought you here, sir?" The bard, all confusion, begged pardon, and told her that he was in quest of the rooms of Mrs. ——; and immediately withdrew. The moment he found himself alone, he thought what an unfortunate being he was, not to have asked for *Mr.* —— instead of *Mrs.* ——! and to be thus seeking for a lady in her private rooms, what would the disturbed female think?—indeed, what would others think, and perhaps say of him, to be thus wandering from room to room, all of which were *private?* Till that moment it had not occurred to him that he might be exposing both himself and his friends to unpleasant surmises. He hastened from the passage, but in his anxiety to escape he missed his way out, and continued wandering in the lobbies and about the staircases for a considerable time, afraid of being seen, and ashamed when he was met by any one, and not daring to ask his way out, lest that confession of his ignorance of his whereabout might lead to a suspicion of his having no business there. At length, by mere chance, he found his way to the door again; but on opening it he felt afraid to proceed onward, lest his confusion should be witnessed. He eventually made his exit without seeing his friends! About three months afterwards Montgomery received a letter which, from the address and the post-mark, he judged to be from the husband of the lady above alluded to. "This," said he to himself, "is certainly from Mr. ——, and what does it contain? I

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may have been the innocent cause of some uneasiness between this excellent couple." He opened the letter; and was not only relieved, but gratified, when he found that it contained an invitation from the gentleman, pressing the poet to visit him and his lady at their family mansion, and acknowledging at the same time his great kindness and the pleasure they had experienced in his society at Scarborough.

Among the very few poetical compositions from Montgomery's pen, which are dated in this year, must be mentioned the "Voyage of the Blind,"* founded on an affecting and authentic narrative of facts connected with the French slave-ship *Le Rodeur*, on board of which the crew and one hundred and sixty negroes suffered horribly from *ophthalmia* and other causes, on her passage from Africa to Europe in the preceding year. This poem first appeared in "Prose by a Poet" (vol. ii. p. 85.), where it is accompanied by some prefatory animadversions on an article in the Treaty of Paris signed in 1814, and which at once acknowledged the iniquity of the Slave Trade, and authorised its practice by the French government for five years!

Having introduced the subject of this poem into the correspondence with his friend Rowland Hodgson, then at Torquay, the latter, after adverting to the well-known story of the ancient painter who wisely covered the face of a father the expression of whose agony he dare not depict, added: —

"Suppose in the catastrophe of the slave-ships, you leave the one on board of which all were blind to the same fate; a part of the wreck picked up at sea — a coral reef dis-

* Works, p. 207.

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covered in the ocean, raised by those small insects, which might hence appear as the instruments of divine vengeance—would be sufficient to account for the loss of the vessel and all her crew."

The poet did not thus consummate his story: the "coral insects" and their ocean architecture were destined to occupy a more important place in a future creation of his genius.

About nine or ten years before this date, Montgomery was wont to be amused by certain rhymes entitled "Newsman's Verses," often very extravagant in their imagery, which appeared in the "Derby Mercury." About this period he ascertained that they were written by an old schoolfellow, John Edwards of Derby, a correspondent of Wordsworth and Coleridge, who afterwards wrote to the Sheffield poet a letter, the acknowledgment of which contained the following passage:—

"I was much surprised some years ago by the appearance of your 'All Saints Church;' for though we had lived together for a short time as boys in Fulneck, in the service, or if you like it better, in the slavery of Mr. John Chambers, and though I knew you were not an every-day youth in your habits of thinking and speaking, for you read much and said little, I never suspected that you cherished a passion for the Muses, till you came forth at once an avowed and successful suitor to more than one of the nine unjealous sisters, who, though they are certainly not prodigal of their smiles to the multitude of their lovers, sometimes condescend all to confer their favours at once. Since then I have been occasionally amused and interested by your 'Newsman's Verses;' and I wonder less at the ability you display in these, than in your self-command in lavishing your intellectual wealth in so humble a sphere, where it is impossible to obtain what poets most eagerly covet, — the praise of the loud world. But you are no loser by this humility at present, though you do

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throw away many a jewel of thought which deserves to be better and more conspicuously set: by these little flights among the hills of Derbyshire you exercise your wings while they are yet growing, and you are gathering strength which may enable you hereafter to take a longer and a loftier course wherein you may attract the homage of congenial spirits in the recognition of your talents, though you may fail to command the attention of a capricious public."

Then followed some monitory suggestions and a page of verbal criticisms on the poetry of Mr. Edwards, a service which, curiously enough, he at once "returned in kind," by suggesting, or rather submitting, some emendations of a passage in the "World before the Flood." What was well meant was well taken:—

"Without at all entering," says the harassed but placable poet, "into any defence of the passages which you have censured, whatever might be said in their favour, I submit to the justice of your sentence against that principal defect in the Creation-piece, and confess that your judgment is so far superior to my execution there, that I shall most gratefully avail myself of the light which you have cast upon the subject, to reconsider if not entirely remodel the lines from the formation of man to the end of the clause: I see *how* they are capable of improvement now, — before, I only saw that they wanted it, and I was discouraged by the labour they had cost me from expending more upon them at the time they were composed. . . . Your lines I *must not* adopt; and if they were written by the Archangel Raphael I would refuse them, for the simple reason that they are not mine."

But besides the mutually amicable and ingenuous disposition of the two poets, the sympathy between them doubtless owed something to another and more hallowed source than the *fons Aganippe*. Immediately

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after that formal act of unity with his Moravian Brethren, to which we have previously adverted, Montgomery thus addressed his worthy co-religionist:—

"DEAR BROTHER EDWARDS,

"I am deeply and humbly thankful that I am permitted thus to address you, as a fellow-member of that congregation of Christ in which we were both born, and from which I have been, for so many long rebellious years, an alien and a voluntary outcast. Your letter pleased and affected me much, as the first I had received from any one, except Brother Ramftler, belonging to the Brethren since my readmission. I hope that henceforth we shall be brothers in heart as well as in name and profession, — brothers by our common relationship to our only Lord and Master, whose poor disciples it is our calling and election to be. May it be the first and last concern of our souls to make these sure, and to love and seek other things only in reference or in subordination to them! — for all our temporal duties and affections may be so sanctified that we may remain *in* the world, without being *of* the world, through that liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free. It will be a true pleasure to me to visit Ockbrook again, which is endeared to my heart by many sweet remembrances of my few short visits there, while my brother was congregation labourer. It pleased the Lord, to whose sole leading I desired to resign myself, in bringing me back to his fold on earth, to order the circumstances that immediately induced my return to the Brethren *so* that it became my duty to apply at Fulneck for restoration to the privileges of his house: otherwise when I had previously meditated the subject, as I have done many and many a time in my mind, it was my wish — a kind of *personal* wish — to apply at Ockbrook, that I might be united with *that* congregation. . . I cannot say that my private wishes have been thwarted, but only that that part of my prayer which was according to his will has been granted in his way, which He gave me grace to determine should be mine."

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But we must pass from these retrospective extracts to a letter of current date.

James Montgomery to John Edwards.

"Sheffield, Dec. 15. 1820.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"I now return your manuscript, having perused it with great pleasure. The principal remarks that occurred to me you will find in pencil, in the margin. These you will easily rub out, making use or not of them as you feel them to be just or otherwise. Generally speaking the Dove [Dovedale] will be a beautiful poem; I could find faults in it, but they would chiefly be negative ones, — it wants distinctness of delineation, but this is almost inevitably the case with descriptive poetry of real scenery, and I don't know how you can obviate the defect; perhaps I cannot even make you understand what I mean by it; but I think you will acknowledge that, from your picturing, no stranger to Dovedale could make out a detailed series of images so as to form a just idea of the singular character of the place. One acquainted with the 'fantastic tricks' which Nature has there played with rock and stream, would no doubt well recognise the faithfulness of your allusions, having actual scenes and features of landscape to which they can *apply* them; but to *infer* such from the description of the poet, is a very different and far more difficult thing than to apply the description to the known objects. The consummate and almost unattainable art of the poet in describing visible and fixed phenomena is to enable the reader to form clear conceptions of their colour, shape, extent, and infinite diversity of aspect; and this, though the subjects are all substantial and unchangeable parts of the very body of Nature, is rarely achieved by the most able masters of song in their happiest moods. I do not intend to apply this *harshly* to your poem; it is at least equal in vivid illustration to some of the favourite pieces of the day, in the same line. I only mention it to turn your attention more closely to the circumstance, that as far

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as possible in future productions you may *write* as if you were *painting*, that the reader may have a picture presented to his imagination, in which the great features at least are sufficiently distinct to excite the same kind of emotion of pleasure which a view of the scene itself would inspire. . .

"I am truly, your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. John Edwards, Derby."

Mr. Bowden with his bride, and the sister of the latter, a Miss Riddell*, being on a visit at Mr. Bennet's house, the poet met them there, and, at the request of their host, addressed to the newly-married couple a "Bridal Benison," † and to their companion, the lines entitled a "Riddle." ‡ The verses here referred to were written in the young lady's album, and are among the earliest of Montgomery's compositions in a form under which he was more frequently, we believe, than any other living poet of his day, called upon to allow his genius — or his ingenuity — to pay tribute to demands upon his good nature. Mrs. Bowden died in 1833, when Montgomery paid a poetical tribute to her memory. § As closing memorials of the current year may be cited the following epitaphs: the first was written for the gravestone of Joseph and Sarah Holy; the former died Dec. 5. 1815, aged 16; and the latter, Feb. 23. 1820, aged 18, both being interred in a vault in the burying-ground adjoining the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Carver Street, Sheffield: —

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* The Misses Riddell were, we believe, the grand-daughters of Mr. Edward Riddell, a pious dissenter at Hull, who first solicited Lady Huntingdon to send to that town, as a preacher, one of the students from her recently opened establishment in Wales. — *Life of Lady Huntingdon*, vol. i. p. 303.

† Works, p. 360. ‡ Ibid. p. 344. § Ibid. p. 350.

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"Farewell to life, and love, and light;
To all beneath the sun farewell:
Here, in the narrow house of night,
A *brother* and a *sister* dwell.

"Yet, weep not, friends and kindred dear;
Bought with an unexampled price,—
Seek not immortal spirits here,
But *follow* them to *Paradise*."

With the second we can connect no name; and in the author's MS. it is merely entitled an

"*Epitaph.*

"They loved through life; in death they lie
At rest beneath the silent sod;
Like them shall all the living die;
Reader! prepare to meet thy God.

"Ah! what are worldly gain and loss,
While still thou hast a soul to save;
Fly, fly for refuge to the cross,—
There's no repentance in the grave."

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CHAP. XLIX.

1821.

POLITICS AND PERSONAL RELIGION. — LETTERS TO J. HOLLAND. — DEATH OF MISS ELIZABETH GALES. — EPITAPHS. — LETTER TO REV. G. CUBITT. — LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY SEND A DEPUTATION TO THE SOUTH SEAS. — MESSRS. TYERMAN AND BENNET. — LETTERS TO MR. BENNET. — DEPUTATION SAIL FROM GRAVESEND. — LETTER TO MISS MONTGOMERY. — LETTERS TO MR. BENNET. — LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH. — CORONATION OF GEORGE IV. — DEATH OF BUONAPARTE.

Politics, both local and national, were not only becoming every day more violent and exciting, but the taste and feelings of the editor of the "Iris" were, in at least an equal degree, getting out of unison with them; while the rude and bitter personalities to which the discharge of a plain duty had exposed him at the close of the preceding year, rendered still more irksome a position the value — not to say the very maintenance — of which was menaced by unscrupulous competitors on all sides. The sadness and sinking of spirit consequent on this state of things was often alluded to in letters to his friends, who, in return, usually offered characteristic consolation and advice. "I grieve," says Archdeacon Wrangham, "to hear you speak of 'darkness, clouds, and shadows.' Poor Barry, the genius of painting, under his occasional depressions, stole to the products of his art; and I found him once at the Society's Rooms in the Adelphi touching up some of the heroes of his Elysium, and humming a cheerful tune. 'Ah! Mr.

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Wrangham,' said he, 'I have now gotten into a world of my own;'— think of your own Javan." Mr. Ramftler, with a truer instinct of the case and its cure, wrote: —

"Your harassing perplexities I sincerely lament, and offer my prayers with you to our dear and faithful Lord, that He would overrule all occurrences for your permanent benefit. Surely it is to a Christian mind like yours an unspeakable satisfaction to write, speak, and act, not from interested, malicious, or temporising views and motives, but with conscientious honesty and integrity. Politics in general are scarcely at any time calculated to promote the growth of grace, but rather to impede it; and a systematic opposition to the mode of government or administration appointed by Providence I cannot persuade myself to be consistent with evangelical precept. May not present incumbrances possibly be a providential hint to you to lay aside politics as your line of employment altogether? Is not peace of mind infinitely more valuable than anything that can be effected by this occupation? Sincerely do I hope that your subsistence may not be found dependent upon the 'Iris,' though — as you allow me to speak freely — I do suspect you to possess so much generosity, as to render it almost impossible for you to subsist by merely a comfortable maintenance for yourself. Fervent and believing prayer will, I trust, throw light upon your path, and be the means of relieving you from present anxieties."

The following letter is one of a sheaf containing many dated in preceding years, and embodying, for the most part, such cautions, encouragements, and criticisms, as the generous editor of the "Iris" deemed suitable and salutary in the poetical minority of his grateful correspondent, who, in reference to this early intercourse with his revered friend, could say, with old Dr. Byrom,—

"My time, O ye Muses! was happily spent."

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James Montgomery to John Holland.

"'Iris' Office, Jan. 3. 1821.

"DEAR SIR,

"I return your manuscript earlier than I promised, and therefore earlier than you expected. I am afraid you think me a severe critic; I would be milder if I cared nothing about you; but I esteem and respect you too much to trifle with the truth, by speaking courteously to you to get rid of feeling or exciting pain by saying unwelcome things, though thereby I best perform my duty to myself and serve you most effectually. I must cut short this preface, or I shall frighten you so much that you will scarcely venture to read what follows: — I have very attentively perused your new poem, and heartily congratulate you on the progress of your muse in improvement as well as in bulk of labours; but I do sincerely think that you have made an unhappy choice of model in this piece if you never did before. That production of which this will remind every reader is not indeed inimitable, but it is unfit to be imitated; to succeed in anything of the kind, the original must not only be equalled, but so far excelled that the reader shall forget it, or remember it only to perceive the superiority of its later rival, which, though coming second to it, must be ranked as first. This remark refers to all imitations; but in the present case the original plan of a dramatic narrative for a poem of any length beyond a ballad was radically wrong, and nothing perhaps but a little novelty (now gone by) and the peculiar interest of the subject — at once romantic and familiar to our earliest feelings and prepossessions in favour of liberty, simplicity, the pastoral life, and the innocence of the olden times — could have secured to such a piece any measure of popularity. Your theme is in itself finer, more splendid, and equally pathetic, but it is almost unknown *; and, instead of finding an existing interest in the heart of every reader, as

* The little poem here alluded to, and afterwards printed by Montgomery, was a "Tale of Palestine," founded on the retreat of the Christians from Jerusalem to Pella on the destruction of the city by Titus; and the versification that of the "Wanderer of Switzerland."

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your forerunner did, you have to *create* an interest, and this under every disadvantage and embarrassment of the vehicle which you have, I think, unfortunately adopted. — But you must, as I have always told you, judge for yourself, when you have heard all that others can say.— There are undoubtedly many beautiful, spirited, and brilliant passages; yet the measure and the turn of dialogue have been fetters which you have graced, but which have not graced you. I have been before you in this dilemma, and, to tell you the truth, it is like dancing on one leg, with the other tied up, in a circle, which, if you overstep a hair's breadth, you fall full on your face. If you choose to publish the poem, under these circumstances (and it is evidently a cherished hope), you had better have it printed here; and if you please to employ me, I will serve you as well as I can. . . .

"I am truly, your friend,

"Mr. John Holland." J. MONTGOMERY.

James Montgomery to John Holland.

"'Iris' Office, Feb. 1. 1821.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"Whenever you please, I shall be very willing to undertake the printing of your poem. My objections were frankly stated; and certainly without any other view than to serve you, by anticipating what persons less indulgently disposed than I am might say; and to break — not the neck, but the *fall* of your hopes, which were placed too high on this piece, and insured disappointment to themselves. You have not yet suffered, nor indeed deserved to suffer, the tenth part of the misery and mortification which I had to encounter when a young and sanguine poet like yourself. These kind of wounds will never kill one who is born for immortality; and each of us have a longing which amounts to half an expectation that such is our high destiny. You are no poet if you have not felt both this and the fear of missing it. "Sincerely your friend,

"Mr. John Holland." J. MONTGOMERY.

And after all this, when the book was printed, Montgomery, on rendering his account, added; —

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"I trust it will be found moderate; but under any circumstances of loss to you, let me know, and I will reduce this charge in proportion. If you do not gain, I would not have you out of pocket by the experiment."

On the 16th of February died Miss Elizabeth Gales. This was the first breach made by death among the three sisters with whom Montgomery had now resided nearly thirty years: and he felt the bereavement deeply. She was a fine-looking woman, open in her disposition; frank in her manners, and had been assiduously engaged with other worthies of her sex in some of the benevolent institutions of the town. She was interred with her parents in the churchyard at Eckington*: Miss Mont-

ECKINGTON CHURCH, DERBYSHIRE.

* Eckington presents few attractive features either in the character of its buildings or in its immediately surrounding

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gomery was present on the occasion, and, when turning from the grave, Montgomery with deep feeling said to her, "Betsy, when I die, bury *me* here!" and in that humble village burying-ground the poet would probably have found his last resting-place, — in death, as in life, the companion of his long attached friends, —had not imperious circumstances ultimately controlled the disposal of his remains. On returning from the funeral, Montgomery presented the sisters of the deceased with the verses beginning, "Soft be the turf on thy dear breast."*

The following epitaph was written at the request of Mr. Everett, to be placed over the grave of a young man at York, who was drowned while bathing in the river Ouse, June 1820:—

"In youth, and health, and promise high,
The servant of the Lord appears
Prepared alike this hour to die,
Or labour on to fourscore years.

"'Twas well; — a moment bade him go
Where all the just are priests and kings;
Faithful in little here below,
Made ruler there o'er many things.

"Thus Hope and Love for him can say,
Whose dust beneath this tablet lies, —
The stream that swept his life away
Wafted his soul beyond the skies."

Of contemporaneous date we have the following—

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scenery, though some pleasing points of view are caught in the distance; nor has the church itself any special claim to admiration either within or without. The north view is represented in the cut, and the situation of the grave of the Gales' family near the chancel door is indicated by the two figures.

* Works, p. 350.

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"*Epitaph on a Child.*

"Go, lovely boy! long sabbath keep
From life's brief toil, — in Jesus sleep;
And though the babe unborn may tread
The turf on thy forgotten bed,
Sleep on, — thy rest securely take;
Sleep on, till Jesus bids thee wake:
Ah! then may all who read this stone
Meet thee with joy before the throne!

"Feb. 10. 1821."

James Montgomery to the Rev. George Cubitt.

"Sheffield, Feb. 27. 1821.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,

"I send you two hymns, according to your desire; the first has been used only once, by the children of the National Schools, and therefore, if good for anything, will be no worse for wear. The second has not been used at all. I have written it for the Red Hill School, but have not yet presented it; so that though you may not receive it before our friends there, you have the first offering of it. The metre of this latter was particularly prescribed to me. I have also written the first words of the several Psalms and Hymns in Mr. Cotterill's collection, for which I am responsible. Since I saw you — indeed, since I heard from you — we have had to pass through much domestic affliction in this house; but I do humbly trust, nay, fervently believe, that it has been sanctified both to the dead and to the living. I thank you for your letter; and wishing you health of body and mind, and above all a heart devoted to the Lord's service, content to labour or to suffer, to prosper or to be laid aside, according to his good pleasure,

"I remain truly, your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Rev. George Cubitt, Boston."

For some time past the Directors of the London

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Missionary Society had thought it desirable to send a deputation from this country to visit some of their more important stations, especially those in the South Sea Islands. A strong and pious wish—ultimately matured into a conscientious determination to engage in this arduous and responsible enterprise, — was entertained by Montgomery's most intimate religious friend, George Bennet, Esq., a gentleman of elegant manners, good information, and living in the enjoyment of a competence, while devoting all his time to doing good in connection with most of the useful institutions of his native town. After due deliberation, his services were tendered to, and gladly accepted by, the Directors, who associated with him the Rev. Daniel Tyerman, the respectable minister of an Independent chapel in the Isle of Wight. The leading objects proposed to the deputation were "to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the state of the missions, and of the islands; and to suggest, and, if possible, carry into effect, such plans as should appear to be requisite for the furtherance of the Gospel, and for introducing among the natives the occupations and habits of civilised life: to form such arrangements as should tend to the introduction of Christian churches; the establishment and improvement of schools for the children of the missionaries, and of the natives, and eventually of trades, as well as a proper and constant attention to the cultivation of the ground." These objects fulfilled, they were to visit successively Java, the East Indies, and Madagascar, for similar purposes.

Neither of the biographers are likely to forget the evening they spent with a party of religious friends at the house which Mr. Bennet gave up the following day, and to which he never returned; and thousands

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will long remember the affecting farewell address of their missionary townsman, which was delivered to a crowded congregation in Queen Street Chapel, about the period indicated by the subjoined note :—

James Montgomery to George Bennet.

"'Iris' Office, March 17. 1821.

"My dear Friend,

"I thank you for the footstool, and when I have occasion for such a rest, it will be some relief to think that it once served you, and served you so well. Will you accept a copy of Bowyer's 'Slave-Trade Poems?' I have only just received it from the bookbinder, otherwise it should have accompanied the verses; but I had detained the latter so long, that I was afraid you would think me unkind, if I did not express some of my feelings on our unexpected separation before the very last moment. I therefore delivered them on Wednesday, thinking you would receive them before you left your old habitation.

"I am very faithfully and affectionately, your friend,

"J. Montgomery.

"G. Bennet, Esq., Highfield."

After adverting, in a feeling manner, to the recent death of Miss Elizabeth Gales, he says, in a letter to Miss Rowntree, of Scarborough :—

"This day I have experienced another bereavement. My dear and honoured friend, Mr. George Bennet, left Sheffield, on his proposed visit to Otaheite and other islands in the South Seas, whence, *if* restored to us, he cannot be expected to return in less than four or five years at the earliest. What may happen to him or to us in that long period — long to look forward, though but like as many days to look backward—who can foresee, when we know not what an hour may bring forth? To be prepared at every moment to meet our God is man's highest wisdom. May

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He in whose hands are the hearts of all men, so rule and influence ours, that we all, whether at Scarborough, at Sheffield, or at Otaheite, may be found, when He comes, watching unto prayer! Then shall it be well with us here, and well with us hereafter."

As might be expected, Montgomery felt a deep and solemn interest, not only in the evangelical object but also in the personal welfare of his friend; and hence he strove to aid him by such counsel and information as he thought likely to be useful under present circumstances.

James Montgomery to George Bennet.

"My dear Friend,

"I have made the following memoranda, which may be of some little service on your mission to the South Sea Islands:—

"Obtain personal interviews with as many missionaries who have been in heathen lands as you can conveniently meet with in London. Inquire especially respecting new settlements, and how they were begun.

"I will give you letters to the Rev. C. J. Latrobe, No. 10. Nevill's Court, Fetter Lane, London; and to Mr. Edward Moore, near St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, who is the agent for the Brethren's Missions. Ask either of these whether they can furnish you with any information respecting *Oli* and *Mydow*, two Otaheitan youths, who were sent many years ago to England by your missionaries, and committed by your Directors to the care of the Moravian Brethren. They were placed by the latter in a school at Mirfield, near Leeds, where they both died (happily, I believe), and were interred in the Moravian burying-ground there. It is probable that Mr. Edward Moore knew them personally.

"Mr. Harvard, the Methodist missionary from Ceylon, is probably in London. Mr. Jowett, from the Mediterra-

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nean, is in England, and would be well worth seeing. Mr. Bickersteth, to whom Mr. Hodgson will give you a letter, would introduce you to him or any other Church missionary.

"You should lay in a stock of missionary books. There is an old Tract on *The Manner in which the Brethren preach the Gospel among the Heathen.* This will be a treasure it you can procure it, because it will refer to a great many *temporal* as well as spiritual things, concerning which, precedents of a good kind may serve you to decide in difficult cases. It is probable you may obtain it at the Brethren's Book-Room, in London. Should Mr. Latrobe not be at home when you call there, Count Reuss, the minister, will give you any information you want, I dare say. There is a new edition of Crantz's 'Greenland,' published by Longmans and Co. Mr. Latrobe's 'Visit to South Africa' is an expensive book, but perhaps you may think it worth taking with you. The Brethren's Periodical Accounts, as many of the numbers as you can procure at the aforesaid Book-Room, I think you ought to take both for entertainment, useful hints, and encouragement. The price, if anything, will be small. A complete set of the Church Missionary Register would be an inexhaustible resource to consult respecting new establishments — schools, building and conducting; chapels erecting; and missionary itinerancies. It would be well on your voyage, as you read such works, to make minutes of everything that is likely to come into application in the course of your labours.

"Provide yourself with any works on which you can lay your hands concerning *the missionary labours of the Jesuits,* either in the East or in the West. The Life of Francis Xavier,—the whole would be preferable to the abridgment; but there is a good abridgment, published, I think, by the Methodist Conference, and to be had at their Book-Room, City Road. There is a poem of extraordinary merit, called the 'Missionary;' and though on a *South American* subject—the scene in Paraguay or Chili — it might be worth purchasing, for the sake of learning from what sources the

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author (the Rev. W. L. Bowles) has drawn his narrative, and described the manners and habits of the Indians, and *the religious policy of their instructors.*

"On board of the ship, take care to be well provided with stores of dried fruits, and *preserves especially*, oranges, lemons, &c. Inquire whether any German *sour kraut* is laid in for the use of the passengers; your brother said king's ships never sail without it on expeditions. Don't forget to secure plenty of *oatmeal*,—this is the best hint I can give you, perhaps, though you may think it trifling; but water-gruel you will find to be good when nothing else is tolerable. Provide a *fur dress* for the cold latitudes.

At Rio Janeiro, or any of the West Indian Islands, if you stop a little, get what information you can respecting the culture of the sugar-cane, cotton and coffee-plants, &c. &c.—Query, *rice*—could it be introduced with advantage into the South Sea Islands? I believe it requires abundant irrigation.

"Take some elementary works on Natural History with you, which may suggest subjects of inquiry into the products of sea and land. Pray examine minutely all the pebbles, shells, and sea-weeds,—and you may send me a specimen or two of these, if you have anything beautiful to spare. *Coral rocks.* Inquire of the natives concerning their former superstitions, practices, wars, history, or any traditions. Look for relics of antiquity in buildings, caves, &c.: learn, as accurately as may be, what was the state of the people before they had communication with Europeans; what it was in the interval between Cook's voyages and the missionary establishments; and what is the condition of those who have renounced heathenism, but are not yet Christians.

"To the foregoing topics I have nothing to add, except that I hope you will get very particular instructions from the Directors respecting what you are expected to do — what powers you may exercise, &c. You cannot be too well prepared to meet difficulties; and to have freedom of acting according to your best discretion is of the utmost importance to the success of your mission.

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"And now, my dear friend, I have only one word of advice to offer you, which I feel I should so much need for myself were I thus going out, that I will believe it may be of some use to you;—be determined, through the grace of God, *not to be offended at small things*, and *not to despise small things*. Remember that you are not going to *build*, but to *plant*. Do not expect, then, to see great effects produced under your eye; but sow in hope, and water with prayer, and wait with faith for the increase in the Lord's good time, and in his own way. To Him, and to the word of his grace, I commend you. Pray for me.

"Your affectionate friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"George Bennet, Esq., Highfield."

A similar tone of affectionate anxiety is evinced in the following letter:—

James Montgomery to George Bennet.

"Fulneck, near Leeds, April 2. 1821.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I write to you from this place, lest I should have no other opportunity of communicating with you before you leave this country. I must, however, be brief. Your affectionate letter, written on the Friday after you left Sheffield, did not reach me till last Wednesday. Into all your painful yet transporting feelings on quitting the place of your birth, and where the Lord for so many years both blessed you and made you a blessing, I entered with deep and lively emotion. Of all who have suffered loss, and loss not soon to be replaced, by your departure, mine must be the greatest bereavement, so far as refers to the intercommunion of personal friendship, and, on my part, the frequent and inestimable tokens of kindness which you were wont to bestow upon me, unworthy as I may have been of your distinguishing favour, and little as it was in my power to offer in return, except the grateful acceptance of your good offices. The Lord, who put it into your heart and your

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power thus to benefit me, Himself reward you for having been, in this respect at least, a faithful steward of what He committed to you for my profit. He now sends you forth to his servants among the heathen,—yea, to the heathen themselves,—with your hands laden with the fruits of his love in your heart, to dispense to them, as you have done to me and thousands in this land, his own gifts. May He keep you as diligent and upright, and humble and persevering, with all faith, and hope, and charity, whither you are going, as where you have been! and may not only the living in the uttermost parts of the earth, but generations unborn, rise up to call you blessed—blessed of the Lord,—for to Him give all the glory!—with as much reason as I do at this day, and as I shall do when I meet you at the judgment seat of Christ! Meet you *there!* Yes, indeed, *there* we shall meet; may it be on his right hand,—or, if I fail, there may we be parted for ever, and you go into life eternal! But of such a separation who can think without fear and trembling? *It need not be*, I know *it need not be;* then daily let us pray that it *may not be.* The text which I twice opened at Wincobank, when we were last there, often recurs to my mind:—'Watch, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man!' Let this text be a mutual watchword between you and me; let us often meet in this passage of Scripture, and, as disciples of the Lord Jesus, let us secure this evidence to ourselves, that we *do* love Him, by keeping this his commandment. I intended that this letter should only be from my head, and consist of a few dry lines of remark, or common-place matters; but my heart, which seemed a sealed-up fountain when I began, has broken out from its fulness, and overflowed the greater part of my paper. The communication, busy as you are, will not be less welcome on that account.

"But I must notice a few points of business. I have discharged the bill at Mr. Carver's: he expressed himself very kindly respecting you; and, indeed, the very bricks in

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the walls, and the stones in the streets, of Sheffield seem affected by your removal, and wish you well,—or would do so, if they could wish anything. The parcel for Colonel Bennet had not been sent off from Mr. Thomas's, and was duly sealed according to your desire. The tract which you wished you to get at the Brethren's chapel is scarce—indeed it is scarcely known. I have inquired here, and rummaged over the book-store in vain for it. However, I have laid my hands upon something which may serve you, and as soon as I get to Sheffield I will forward it with this letter in a coach parcel, in fervent hope that it may reach you before you 'take the wings of the morning.' I have made a few pencil-marks against particular passages, from which you may gather useful hints. I never saw the pamphlet myself before, but have just run it over before I took up my pen to write to you—indeed, the impression made upon my own heart by the perusal of it determined me to write now, that I may not lose a day, and thereby, perhaps, lose two years, by missing you on the eve of your departure from England. There is nothing *extraordinary* in these pages; indeed, the greater part consists of such plain and simple truth, that you may almost wonder that I should trouble you with the request to peruse it, and *keep it by you for occasional reference.* However, I am persuaded that it will be of service to you at your journey's end, and in your official labours. I think it may be of advantage to your brethren the missionaries in the South Sea Islands. These are words of truth and soberness, grounded on Scripture, and confirmed by long experience of some of the most devoted labourers and successful servants of Christ among the Gentiles. I have one word more of business . . . . Pray give my best regards to Mr. Rowland Hodgson, if you meet him again. The Misses Gales, and my niece, would not forgive me, if in writing I forget to present their kind remembrance, and fervent good wishes for your welfare. Mr. Samuel Roberts was poorly when I left home: he had been flung from his horse. I hope, however, to find him recovered on my return home

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to-morrow. And now, once more farewell; and the Lord bless you and keep you, and cause his face ever to shine upon you, and may He give you peace!

"Your affectionate friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"George Bennet, Esq., Missionary Rooms,
Old Jewry, London."

On the 22nd of May Messrs. Bennet and Tyerman sailed from Gravesend in the "Tuscan," a South Sea whaler, whose owner, Alexander Birnie, Esq., gave them a free passage, along with three other missionaries and their wives. Montgomery's parting sentiments are embodied in the well-known valedictory stanzas* addressed to his friend on the eve of sailing; but little did the poet or the gentlemen of the deputation foresee that the events of the remarkable circumnavigation of the globe about to be accomplished were destined to be finally recorded by his pen.

James Montgomery to Miss E. C. Montgomery.

"Sheffield, April 25. 1821.

"MY DEAR BETSY,

"You will think it long before you hear from Sheffield, and if you did not know that I was the worst correspondent in the world — except your father — you would perhaps be uneasy, and wonder what could be amiss. There is nothing amiss, I assure you, except what is so every day, — that I have more to do than I could if I were ever so willing, and that I do less than I might, because I do nothing in the right time. I now am compelled either to write a few hasty lines this afternoon, or keep you in suspense for a fortnight to come. I am unexpectedly called to Newcastle, and must start to-morrow. I shall probably be away ten days, and when I return, shall meet such arrears of other business, as

* Works, p. 341.

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will prevent me from taking up my pen for a paper journey to Woolwich for a week afterwards. We were very glad to hear from you, that notwithstanding all the *disagreeabilities* of a stage-coach passage, you arrived safely in London, were received into the arms of your father on alighting, and were duly delivered by him into those of your mother and sister. In the bosom of your affectionate family I cannot doubt that you will be pleased to find yourself again, after all the changes of the ten months of absence, which seem, on looking back, to me to have been but as ten days, though to you a great and very interesting portion of your life. What your future views, and hopes, and prospects are, I know not: I never could find courage to ask you any question that might give you pain to answer, or that might touch upon the most delicate and sacred feelings of a young person's heart; and I shall never desire to know more than you can freely communicate, and even then in such cases only when you think that I can serve you, either with advice or otherwise. I was moved to tears in reading your letter, and learning in your own words what were your sensations on parting with us. You know, my dear Betsy, that we would gladly have detained you, and we only let you go from us under the peculiar circumstances of the case. . . . . By the return of Miss Gales, our family (who join in most cordial remembrance and love to you) is, as it must be for a little while longer, and unless you return, or Harriet comes, it is not likely to change till there shall be one less, and then another, and then another, and then there will be none! Long after that time may you and your sister be healthy, and happy, and on your way to heaven. Sometimes, then, I am sure, Betsy will remember her visit to Sheffield, and though tears may spring at some recollections, she will never be sorry that she made it. Love to father and mother, and Harriet.

"Your affectionate uncle,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Miss Montgomery, Woolwich."

The writer's allusion to "delicate and sacred feelings"

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arose out of a knowledge of the fact that a tender attachment subsisted between his niece and Mr. Edmund Foster, of Woolwich.

The following letter contains, on its first page, an allusion to a little incident which afterwards suggested some pleasing verses, and current notices of local proceedings, in which the writer and his friend were mutually interested:—

James Montgomery to George Bennet.

"Sheffield, June 16. 1821.

"My dear Friend,

"I do not know where this will meet you, or when; but understanding that Mr. M'Coy will have an early opportunity of forwarding letters to Port Jackson, I will embark on this sheet of paper in great haste I assure you, and make as good speed as I can, that while you are sailing half round the world to the West, I, by sailing half round it in the contrary direction, may meet you on the shores of Otaheite, — if not face to face, — hand to hand, and heart to heart. In a far country, the least thing that reminds us of our own awakens in a moment a thousand endeared associations; and if home sickness comes over the spirit, too exquisitely touched, the anguish soon throbs itself into composure, or is exalted into 'the joy of grief.' One of the last incidents before we parted has often recurred to my mind; — you committed to my care a letter which you had borrowed from a botanical friend, and which had been written to him by the Rev. Dr. Carey of Serampore. In that letter he mentions that a common field daisy had unexpectedly sprung up in his garden, out of a quantity of English earth in which the seeds of other plants had been transported to India. With this playmate of his infancy and companion of his youth — for such the daisy is to all of us who have had the happiness to be born in the fields of our native land, instead of its cities — he had been so charmed, that from year to year he had trained

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a succession of seedlings to remind him of what he had loved and left at home. Now though this letter of mine may be as insignificant in itself as a daisy appears among millions of its own and a thousand other species of flowers, to a supercilious eye in England, yet to you the handwriting on the direction I know will be as welcome as the phenomenon of the daisy in India to good Dr. Carey. I have little to say, and am so pressed with troubles and duties (the former grievously aggravated by the perpetual neglect of the latter), that I am fairly writing by stealth, from a crowd of more importunate obligations, which are dunning and mobbing me on every side. Alas! the prodigal of time — and the procrastinator is the greatest spendthrift of that most invaluable treasure — must always live in this kind of tribulation. I am too old to mend, I fear, — nay, I despair of doing so, — and yet I must, or I may fail at last in what is of more importance than all the world to me, as one whose day is far spent, with whom the evening of life is closing in deeper shadows every hour, and whom the unbroken night or the unsetting glory of eternity will soon surround for ever and for ever. Nothing of particular interest has occurred among your connections here, except what we all expected, but the inconvenience of which we could not otherwise than by experience know. We are continually reminded of our bereavement by your departure: in the social circle your chair is empty; your face is not seen in the sanctuary, and at our public meetings the place which you occupied is filled by others, but not as you filled it. Repeatedly, on anniversary occasions, you have been remembered, not only in our hearts, but with our tongues we have testified how sincerely we loved you, and how deeply, for our own sake, we deplore your removal: I may name especially — because you will be pleased to be thereby transported in spirit to the scenes in which you have often been engaged with your friends here, in holy and delightful as well as benevolent and disinterested service — the Missionary Union in Queen Street Chapel, on Easter Monday — the Old Women's anniversary in the Cutlers' Hall, about the middle of May — the Sunday School

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Union Committees, and especially the children's muster on the new burial ground (for the last time probably, as the foundations of a church are soon to be laid there; and the dead, for ages to come, are to be assembled round its future walls)—the sermons at Carver Street, Queen Street, Baptist, and Independent Methodist Chapel, in the forenoon; — but above all, in the teachers' meeting in the afternoon, on Whit-Monday. On the latter occasion I was *disabled.* I meant to have laid out my whole strength, to supply, as far as lay in my power, the loss that would be felt by your absence; but it pleased the Lord to lay his hand on me, and though I was enabled to be a partaker, I could scarcely be called a helper, of the joy of our numerous array in that glorious field.

"The wound that incapacitated me from taking a prominent part in the action had been received in the same service, however; and I 'pursued the triumph, and partook the gale,' as heartily as if I had been the hero of the day. On the Friday evening before the anniversary I had returned from Halifax (where the West Riding Missionary Association meeting was held this year, and where you were remembered in almost every speech), much exhausted in body, and labouring under indisposition beside; however, being willing in spirit, I went down to the committee [of S. S. U.] and read — what indeed, nobody else could have read — the report at length, compiled from matter transmitted by the town and country schools. This brought on a violent inflammation of the throat; but I was again delivered from the miseries of a quinsy by the application of leeches to the part externally, as I had been saved in like manner a few months before. However, such were the zeal and love to the cause displayed by your old associates, that neither the lack of your service nor mine was felt, otherwise than by the kindness and partiality of friendship, to be any drawback from the enjoyment of the day. I don't remember, since the first, a more animated meeting of the Union. A resolution shall be transmitted to you, in which, beside a vote of cordial thanks for your past services, you are requested to allow your name to be recorded among us as patron for

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life of the S.S. Union. I ought not to forget that our friend, Mr. R. Hodgson, at the Church Missionary meeting held in the chancel of Rotherham Church a few days ago, made mention of you and your mission in such terms as delighted and affected many — or rather all — who were then present, and excited Christian sympathy in no ordinary degree in the bosoms of Churchmen, Methodists, and Dissenters, of whom the assembly was composed. At the Hathersage Bible Association, on Wednesday, I had an opportunity of pronouncing your name in ears to which it was exceedingly agreeable, but which would have been much better pleased to have heard your voice. But I must close this recapitulation.— I know of no *mortal* change among your friends here, though you must look henceforth for the record of one or another such in every future epistle from your correspondents on this side of the mighty water. We shall never *all* meet again as we were wont in this world; but there are seats prepared for us at that table to which the redeemed shall come from the east and the west, the north and the south, and sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Ah! then, may none of us be thrust out; nor need we, unless we exclude ourselves. I duly received your welcome letter from the Isle of Wight; and we heard of your setting sail. The Lord be with you.

"Your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Geo. Bennet, from Sheffield, at Otaheite."

James Montgomery to George Bennet.

"Sheffield, June 27. 1821.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I believe I have yet opportunity of sending this letter, after my packet of Saturday last, in time to accompany it. I am just returned from the Rotherham College Annual Meeting, at which a most cordial resolution of thanks, good wishes, and prayers, was likewise passed in remembrance of your past services there. Messrs. John Clayton, jun., and George Rawson, Esq., were appointed vice-

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treasurers in your stead. The Rev. J. Bennett desired me to present his special regards, and to add to what hints he had given you in his private letter on the subject of your present engagement, the following,—to recommend to the missionaries *not* to confine their reading of the Scriptures or Scripture instruction among the natives to that portion (I believe Luke's gospel) which is already printed, but frequently to make spontaneous translations from various parts of the Word of God, of which their brethren (when they happen to hear them) should make minutes at the time, and afterwards these translations should be the subject of private examination and criticism among themselves; and thus, being made as perfect as possible, be laid by for future use; whereby the natives would be earlier made acquainted with the Scriptures (and better too), than by waiting for the gradual version of the whole, besides that these very documents would form the best materials for a complete version of the Bible. Once more, God bless you.

"Your sincere and faithful friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"George Bennet, Esq., to the care of Mr. Edw. M'Coy,
No. 2. Union Street, Blackfriars, London."

The following was written with a pencil under the drawing of a withered oak-leaf, with an acorn, made by Jane Taylor in her sister's (Mrs. Gilbert's) album, — the sketch accompanied by verses beginning, "It faded ere it fell," &c.

"'It faded ere it fell' to earth,
But 'twas the weight of fruit
That brought it down;—to second birth
The acorn soon will shoot,
And ages shall rejoice to see
The glory of the future tree.

"Thy leaves, fair minstrel, fall around,
And freely let them fall;

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Yea, let them perish on the ground,
If life from death they call.
The wither'd leaf thy symbol be,
Whose acorn shall become a tree.
"Hull, June, 1821."

The coronation of George IV. on the 9th of July was celebrated in Sheffield by the laying of the first stone of St. George's Church, a fabric which overlooks the town from an elevated site in the flank of the beautiful suburbs. Coincidently with making the arrangements for the proceedings here adverted to, tidings arrived of the death of Bonaparte at St. Helena.* Montgomery, who had "oftener, perhaps, than any other provincial journalist then living, published his opinions concerning Bonaparte—having followed him, pen in hand, on every step of his career, from his earliest Italian campaign to his final captivity," now found himself called upon to record his death and write his epitaph. He accordingly devoted a leading article in the "Iris" to this theme.

"In any age or country, in any rank or condition, and under any circumstances, it may fairly be assumed, that Bonaparte would have been an extraordinary man;—with villagers 'the first wrestler on the green;' a Bamfylde Moore Carew among gypsies; on his native mountains a ringleader of banditti; a Cæsar in the degenerate days of Rome; the wolf of his tribe in the woods of American Indians; a Mahomet at Mecca; a Genghis Khan amidst the hordes of wild Tartars; a Cœur de Lion in the van of Crusaders; a Turenne under the Grand Monarque; and 'himself alone' among the French revolutionists. The natural impulse of

* The ex-emperor died May 5.

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superior talents would have borne him to the loftiest summit within the ring of any horizon to which he was circumscribed; but it depended, in a great measure, on the scene, the actors, and events of his day, whether he was to be only 'the champion' of contemporary bruisers like Cribb, or the conqueror of the world like Alexander. In Derbyshire a man can climb no higher than the top of Mam Tor; in Wales he may reach double that elevation on Snowdon; but from the glens of Switzerland he may scale the Alps, and sit in sunshine while the world beneath him lies in darkness; yet here he will be lower than the traveller who plants his foot on the ridge of the Andes, and sees on his right hand and on his left the two oceans that engirdle the globe, foaming to break their barriers on the impregnable shores of South America, that for ever dispart them. . . . .

"His rock was like the standing place in a panorama, from which, with a circumspective glance, he could ruminate on the faded glories of the past, like the Alps after sunset, obscured yet enlarged by obscurity, and when no longer visible, still in themselves as magnificent and immovable as ever;—he could dwell on the melancholy realities of the present; his fall, his exile, and his island, the impassable sea and the over-arching sky, the same to-day as yesterday, the same to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow;—he could search, too, though in vain, the darkness of the future. In that darkness he has himself disappeared, and the gates of eternity are shut upon him. From these we retire with awe and trembling; what he *was* on earth, and what he *is* here now, alone belong to us. There was a time when the pulsation of his heart was felt through millions of bosoms; when life and death, when thrones and kingdoms, seemed determined by it; had it then stopped short, the shock would have been electrical throughout the civilised world. It *has* ceased at length, and little sensation has been manifested, yet its power must be estimated by what may be easily imagined, — the sensation that would have been manifested, if, instead of his demise, his re-landing in Europe

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had been announced; in fact, the feeling awakened by this change in that 'frame of adamant,' which held a 'soul of fire,' will be deep and concealed, and yet cherished; for, fallen as he was, there hung about his being, while an inhabitant of this world, more fears and hopes, perhaps more expectations, than were associated with the life of any other man in existence.

He is dead; Bonaparte is dead; and we promised to furnish his epitaph. It shall be brief; it shall be the only epitaph worthy of him,—

'BUONAPARTE,'

—his name, as it is written in his mother-tongue, and unclipt by French flippancy. Whatever is added to this will be a reduction of its force; for his name—his name alone—is associated with all that he was, that he did, that he said, and that he suffered; anything else, which came short of the entire records of his history, would be an imperfect exhibition of a part only of what will be remembered concerning him so long as human institutions endure.

"When he was secretly preparing in Elba to recover his empire, the symbol of his partisans at home was a violet, with the significant motto, '*Elle reviendra au printems*,' — It will return in spring! Year after year the violet will bloom in the valleys of France, but he who assumed it for his emblem will never be seen there again. In the intoxication of triumph he was wont to boast of his invincible star. The star of his birth henceforward will shine on his grave, and it does so twenty years earlier than he himself had decreed the time of his death when he wedded Maria Louisa, and promised to live his threescore years and ten. The trumpet of war was the music most sweet to his ear on the morning of battle; he will never awake to that trumpet again; in the tomb there is peace, and the troubler of the world will rest on his bed till the day of judgment. Great and terrible as he was, and renowned as he will be

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through all generations, he *has* lived, he *is* dead, and in this respect no more can be said of him than of the meanest, the weakest, and poorest of the children of Adam.

"'Man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and *where is he?*'"

We more particularly advert to the article which contains the foregoing passages, not only because it is the eulogy of the editor on him who had been the arch-troubler of Europe through a quarter of a century, but from the curious fact that, at the solicitation of the building committee, Montgomery's manuscript copy of it, as the contemporary record of an important event, was, with a set of the coronation medals, and other usual memorials, actually placed in the glass jar under the foundation stone of St. George's Church. The hymn beginning "Lord of Hosts, to thee we raise," &c.*, was composed and sung at this time — as it has often since been on similar occasions. As to the coronation itself, Montgomery thought that, "on the whole, it might be regarded as one of the most auspicious events which this country had ever known:" because, "George IV. was the first king, in the space of one hundred and thirty years, on whose head had been placed an undisputed crown;" and moreover, the nation was at peace at home and abroad: "but the chief reason," said he, "why this day may be registered among 'the proud days of Old England,' arises out of the moral and mental condition of the people. There is vice and there is ignorance enough, and too much, in the land; but yet there is so large and increasing a portion of knowledge and virtue from the improved state of education and the extension of religious principle, not among the poor only but among all classes in an

* Original Hymns, CCCI.

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ascending scale, that there never was—since this island

> "'First, at Heaven's command,
> Arose from out the azure main,'

—a time when Britain more universally ruled the waves, or when of her sons it might be more confidently affirmed, that 'Britons never shall be slaves.'" *

* Iris, July 24, 1821.

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CHAP. L.

1821.

CONVERSATION. — BELZONI. — CAPTAIN COOK. — DOUBLE NEGATIVES. — LETTER TO MR BENNET. — GEORGE THE FOURTH VISITS IRELAND. —DEATH OF QUEEN CAROLINE. — LETTER TO DAVID LAING. — MONTGOMERY AT HARROGATE. — "WOMAN," A POEM. — GOVERNOR WALL. — LETTER TO MRS. FOSTER. — PRESENT FROM SHEFFIELD TO THE WIDOW OF BURNS. — LETTER FROM MRS. BURNS. — REMARKS ON BLASPHEMOUS PUBLICATIONS. — REV. IGNATIUS MONTGOMERY REMOVES TO OCKBROOK. — ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE. — LETTER FROM REV. DR. CARTWRIGHT. — CONVERSATIONS. — MILTON AND DANTE. — NEGLECTED GENIUS. — HUME AND GIBBON. — DR. BUCHAN AND "DOMESTIC MEDICINE." — LETTER TO J. HOLLAND. — LORD MILTON AND THE BIBLE SOCIETY. — "ABDALLA AND SABAT." — GREECE AND TURKEY.

JULY 25. Mr. Everett met Montgomery with a party at the house of Mr. Thomas, surgeon, of Sheffield. Mrs. Kilham's project of going to Africa, and in person instructing the natives, was mentioned. *Montgomery:* "Of all romantic schemes, this seems the most romantic; and yet she is such a truly conscientious and persevering woman, that she would almost induce one to hope against hope." *Everett:* "It is curious to perceive something like a missionary movement among the Quakers." *Montgomery:* "The object of those among them who would visit the heathen, is not so much to endeavour to evangelise them by the instrumentality of preaching, as to instruct some of them by the means of schools, and thus enable them to instruct others." *Mrs. Harwood:* "Mrs. Kilham and my sister Unwin never come into our house, but I find

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they have left me something to do for them." *Montgomery:* "Yes; they form a capital pair of scissors for cutting out work." The present state of the Jews was adverted to; Montgomery agreed with the Rev. Thomas Smith in repudiating Buchanan's notion, that their final impenitence was sealed by the utterance of that memorable imprecation at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion, "His blood be upon us, and on our children." "Good Mr. Simeon," added he, "has the most compendious scheme for converting them, by making them, in great numbers, preachers among themselves." Mr. Smith mentioned the cruelty and extortion to which they used to be subject in this country, and told the story in which King John is said to have drawn all the teeth of a Jew, before the latter would give up his gold. *Montgomery:* "Poor fellow, he lost his money *in spite of his teeth!*" Belzoni's discoveries in Egypt, his description of the crunching skeletons in the mummy-pits, and the perils to which he, and some other travellers in Africa had been exposed, were noticed. *Montgomery:* "Belzoni seems to have breathed, for the time, an atmosphere of dust which had once been vital with humanity; he was indeed an extraordinary man: I little, however, thought, when I saw him on the stage at Sheffield*, more than twenty years since, that he was destined to achieve such a reputation as that which he at this moment so deservedly enjoys." From Africa, the conversation turned to Switzerland and its avalanches, Smith asserting that these mighty masses of frozen matter acquired increase of bulk in their descent down the mountain slopes, in the manner of an ordinary snow-ball; Montgomery, on the other

* He performed three nights as "The Patagonian Samson," June, 1806.

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hand, contending that they more commonly broke up than accumulated in their fall. New Zealand was mentioned. *Everett:* "Mr. Leigh, one of our missionaries to that country, told me that he was much pleased to find the name of Captain Cook, with a date, cut on the face of a rock; and that some of the old men remembered him. The natives had a tradition that their forefathers lived in canoes on the ocean, and that one of them when fishing, drew up an island, of which they took possession, until it grew to its present size.* I should think this is an obscure memorial of the ark and its inmates." *Montgomery:* "I do not wonder at Mr. Leigh's gratification at the sight of such a memento of the visit of the great navigator; besides, these were probably the first characters ever written in that island—the earliest form in which language ever presented itself to the *eye* of a New Zealander. As to the tradition of the canoe, it has most likely some reference to the appearance, above water, of some of those coral islands which are constantly in progress of formation in the South Seas." Some one used an expression which led to remarks on what is termed the *double negative* used by Greek and Latin writers; Montgomery instantly cited, as a striking instance of the occurrence of it in our own language, the following passage from Milton:—

> "Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
> In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel."
>
> *Par. Lost*, B. i. v. 335.

He had seen, and appreciated at a high rate, the landscapes of Turner,—a judgment, the correctness of which was abundantly corroborated by the testimony

* *Vide* Sir G. Grey's "Polynesian Mythology," p. 44.

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of art-critics during the ensuing thirty years, or life-time of the painter.

James Montgomery to George Bennet.

"Sheffield, Aug. 8. 1821.

"My dear Friend,

"I have been hindered to the last moment, and have only opportunity to say that I have sent you a few reports published since you left us, and enclosed some packets from friends which will make my scrawl acceptable. I have written two letters after you, which are gone to Botany Bay, containing all the information I had to give up to the beginning of last month. Nothing very particular has occurred since. We have just lost a most amiable and excellent acquaintance, Mr. Samuel Smith*; with his admirable partner you will know how to sympathise on such a bereavement. Another member of the Friends' Society, whom you may probably remember so long that you do not recollect the time when you did *not* remember him, good Thomas Scantlebury, is supposed to be very near his end. Thus one and another of our friends and neighbours are continually removing, and the scene in which we live is changing so gradually, that without comparing what it is with what it was at a given distance of time, we are not aware, how much revolution has taken place around us, nor aware, as we ought to be, how much progress we are making toward the close of this life, and the beginning of that which shall have no close. When you return to your native town, four or five years hence, as we fervently hope and pray that you may do in health and peace, and riper both for earth and heaven in the fruits of the Spirit, you will discover much more keenly

* Of Carr Wood, near Sheffield; a plain, warm-hearted Quaker. His widow, an intelligent and excellent woman, survived him several years: Montgomery was a frequent visitor at her house, where, on one occasion, he met the celebrated Mrs. Fry, whose prayer made an indelible impression on his memory and on his heart.

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and affectingly than we can here (should we survive), how much the places, the people, and all things have altered in your absence. O may it be generally for the better! And those whom you left and meet not then, may they have left a testimony behind them, that as they pleased God, they are not, because He hath taken them! Two letters I have received from you, dated at sea. They came as if brought by the hands of spirits from an invisible world: on the sea, the wind can fix you nowhere, and, therefore, till you are again on solid ground, and we can place a finger on the map that represents the spot of your dwelling, you are as if you were flying in the air to another planet, or diving under the depths of the ocean to a little world enclosed in this. When, therefore, a letter comes from you over the waves, and under the wings of the wind, we instantly look at the globe, and mark on the blank expanse of water, the speck of *lat.* and *long.* where your vessel hovered when your thoughts were poured out into our minds, at the distance of thousands of miles, and those specks become identified localities as much as if new islands had sprung up there from the bottom of the abyss. Mr. Roberts has just called, and sends his love and all his family's love to you. *He* wishes to hear from you himself; I hope he will yet before you reach the Southern Islands. Miss Gales's join in kindest remembrance. Sarah [Gales] wrote in my packet to Botany Bay. My niece Betsy was married a few weeks ago, to a person with whom she had grown up, I may say, in mutual attachment; I hope — and I think the hope is not a vain one — that they will be happy and good too, in a good sense. Accept the assurance of my best esteem and affection.

"Your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY."

The King went to Ireland in the month of August. As we have intimated, the arrival of the tidings of the death of Napoleon and the coronation of George IV., were simultaneous occurrences. But a darker shadow — indeed, the deepest that eclipses the ordinary home of

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the domestic affections — was cast across the sunshine of the royal progress — the demise of the Queen Consort! What effect this event had, or whether any, on the feelings of the sovereign, does not appear; but it arrested the pen of Montgomery in the midst of his weekly essay, and led him to conclude an article intended to celebrate the "Irish carnival," with an appeal to the ancient canon, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, in respect to the memory of the hapless Caroline of Brunswick.

Mr. David Laing, of the Signet Library, Edinburgh, having, along with Dr. Irving, edited and printed, in a handsome volume, the works of the old Scottish poet, Alexander Montgomerie, sent a copy to his Sheffield namesake, who thus acknowledged the present: —

James Montgomery to David Laing.

"Sheffield, Aug. 21. 1821.

"SIR,

"Accept my best thanks for the very handsome gift of 'Montgomerie's Poems.' I have long wished to become acquainted with his writings on account of his name, his country, and a little circumstance which happened when I was a boy. A bookseller's catalogue fell into my hands, and as there was no species of publication which I was wont to read more eagerly, to learn the names of authors and their works, and fill my mind with romantic imaginations in conning over titles, and wondering how such and such subjects were treated by those whom I revered as a kind of superior beings, having never in my life seen a man who had in any shape appeared in print, in the perusal of the catalogue above mentioned I was delighted to find a poet of my own name, and I looked at the line which announced the 'Cherrie and the Slae' with indescribable emotion, curiosity, and regret, for the price put it quite out of my power and almost out of my hope till I was 'a man,' (when I was to do everything that I could not do as a boy,) to purchase the

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treasure. However, it passed with many a joy and grief of youth, the remembrance of which has been forgotten, but this was never entirely forgotten; though in the multitude of books that were ever changing under my eyes since that time, I never met with any work of this author, and gradually became less and less interested in him or his glory, as I soon found that he was not one of those who filled the world with their renown, and were destined in their immortal writings to be the contemporaries of every future generation; and it was with these chiefly that I was ambitious to be intimate. The unexpected arrival of your elegant volume of this poet's works revived the dream of my boyhood about the 'Cherrie and the Slae,' and I dreamt it over again in looking at your title-page, with delight as intense and undefinable as when the first vision of this subject came across my mind, then teeming with gay unrealities, as I contemplated the world to come of prose and rhyme destined for my future enjoyment, the phantoms of which were flitting before me on the leaves of the bookseller's catalogue. You will think the inebriation of fancy has not yet quite gone off from the rambling discourse into which I have been insensibly carried by recurring to so trifling an event; but to a man himself, no event that can be remembered at such a distance of time can be altogether trifling; for it must have had some influence on his fortune, his character, or his heart, and so far have marked an era of his life. But to return to the only lawful purpose of this letter, I may say that from the few portions of this volume which I have been enabled to read, among other more pressing occupations, since yesterday morning, I cannot doubt that my poetical namesake has left something which deserves to be read in the third century after his death; and that I shall have cause to be interested in his reputation not for his name and lineage alone, but for his talents' sake. Once more sincerely thanking you for this very acceptable present,

"Believe me,

"Your obliged friend and servant,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"David Laing, Esq., Edinburgh."

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In September Montgomery was at Harrogate, and an amusing description of a "forenoon" as spent by him there, may be seen in the "Egotist," No. III.* *Holland:* "I am told, sir, that you have commenced a poem on 'WOMAN;' pray, how does it proceed?" *Montgomery:* "Not at all; I certainly once entertained some idea of the kind, and even wrote a long episode on a very interesting and affecting instance of female trial and constancy. But I was at a loss for a title: I thought of the 'Worth of Woman,' but that, you perceive, is too tame and prosaic." *Holland:* "I am busy with a poem on 'Matrimony,' and should like to beg your episode." *Montgomery:* "I dare say it would suit your purpose, but I shall probably use it on some occasion myself." The composition here referred to, was afterwards published under the title of a "Tale without a Name."† It was suggested by the presence at Harrogate of the widow of the unfortunate Governor Wall.‡ "I felt," said Montgomery, "when I saw that woman in her solitary walks, and recollected how faithfully she clung to her husband through the period of his desertion, disgrace, and suffering, that I loved the whole sex better for her sake." The verses on "Night"§ were written at Harrogate during this visit.

* Prose by a Poet, vol. ii. p. 197.

† Works, p. 212.

‡ Governor Wall was arrested by order of Government for crimes committed in Africa: he afterwards escaped out of custody, was recaptured, tried, and executed.—Vide "Espriella's Letters," vol. i. p. 97.; also a curious account in Smith's "Book for a Rainy Day," p. 165., and "Gentleman's Magazine," June 1792.

§ Works, p. 318.

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From Harrogate he wrote to his niece to congratulate her on her marriage with Mr. Foster:—

"The intelligence of your marriage, dear Betsy, did not surprise me, because I was in some measure prepared for it; and little as had passed between you and me on the subject, I had good hopes that the union was a suitable one, and would prove the means of happiness both to yourself and to your companion for life. Yet I did feel something like sorrow, because it closed a period of your time in which I might have reckoned, had it continued a little longer, on more of your society at Sheffield, where your presence, under peculiarly afflicting circumstances, had been a blessing both to myself and my friends there, and where your absence for a long time made a void that is not yet filled; nor will it be, unless you can prevail on dear Harriet to come and supply it."

After acknowledging certain "wedges of bride-cake, and what was more welcome," his niece's letter, Montgomery slides to an ever congenial topic:—

"It delighted me to find, in your former letter, that what you had seen, and heard, and felt at Sheffield of the best things,—because they pertain both to this world and the next,—had made a happy and abiding impression on your mind; and this was to me an earnest, that in whatever circumstances of life you might hereafter be placed, you would be under the gracious influence of the promises and hopes of the Gospel, and its salutary terrors too, to restrain you from evil, to guard you against danger, and guide you in the way of peace and safety—the narrow way that leadeth to eternal life. In that way, my dear Betsy, may you and your partner walk arm in arm through the cares and trials, the joys and duties of your pilgrimage here; and may the knot of love now tied on earth between you be tied in heaven also,—that as it cannot be loosed

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except by death here, it may never be loosed there, where there is no death!"

Several individuals, members of the West Riding "Caledonian Society," residing at Sheffield, having resolved to present to the widow of Burns some memento of their respect for the genius of her deceased husband, a pair of silver candlesticks, with snuffers and tray to match, were subscribed for and manufactured in that town. On the tray was engraved the following appropriate lines from the pen of Montgomery:—

"The gift of a few Scots in Sheffield to the widow of Burns.

> He passed through life's tempestuous night,
> A brilliant, trembling Northern Light;
> Through years to come he shines afar,
> A fixed, unsetting Polar Star."

On the 21st of October these articles were presented to the relict of the poet at Dumfries, by Dr. Brown, in these words: —

"MRS. BURNS: I have the honour to present to you, from my countrymen in Sheffield, this trifling gift, as a tribute of respect to you as the relict of the author of 'The Cottar's Saturday Night.' We have only to regret, our number being so few in Sheffield, that we have not had it in our power to present the widow of Scotia's immortal bard with something more worthy of her acceptance, and more congenial to our wishes. Such as it is, we trust that you will oblige us by your acceptance of it."

Mrs. Burns expressed her most grateful acknowledgments for this compliment from her generous countrymen residing at Sheffield. Mr. MacDiarmid, the talented editor of the "Dumfries Courier," and who

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has been said to resemble Montgomery in his style, was present on this occasion, and was particularly curious in his inquiries about the Sheffield bard, to whom he was very anxious to be introduced, should he ever have the opportunity.* A few days after this interview, Mrs. Burns transmitted the following letter to the gentlemen who had been deputed to present the gift:—

"Dumfries, Oct. 25. 1821.

GENTLEMEN,

"With the most lively feelings of gratitude I offer you my best thanks for the very handsome present I have received by the hands of Mr. Brown,—a present which combines so much elegance with usefulness, and which I can show to my friends with pride and pleasure.

"I shall carefully preserve this interesting gift while I live; and when, in the course of nature, it passes into the possession of my children, I need not say that it will be equally prized.

"The value of this elegant gift is much enhanced by the tribute paid to the memory of my husband, from the pen of a *poet*, not less celebrated for his talent than for his philanthropy.

"I must at the same time acknowledge my thanks to Mr. Brown for the very handsome manner in which he presented this flattering mark of your attention.

"That the Society, to whom I am so much indebted, may long be united by all that warmth of feeling and love of country which so eminently distinguish Scotsmen, is the sincere wish of,

"Gentlemen, your gratefully obliged,

"JEAN BURNS.

"To the Members of the Burns' Society, Sheffield."

When this letter was handed to Montgomery for

* The parties never met.

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insertion in the "Iris," it was amusing to see how he was chafed by the dilemma in which it placed his modesty between a reluctance to publish the compliment to himself which it contained, and the failure of his ingenuity in attempts to get quit of it. With this letter, an odd volume of the "Observer," bearing the autograph of "Robt. Burns," was sent by the widow of the poet. This relic fell to the lot of Montgomery: and it was not without a fresh recognition of the wide influence of poetic reputation, and a deeper conviction of the sin of genius perverted, that we first saw the handwriting of the highly gifted "Ayrshire Ploughman."

On Oct. 15th he attended the meeting of a Religious Tract Society, in Garden Street Chapel, and read a report comprising a curious essay on the Indestructibility of Words, of which he gave us a copy: the matter somewhat abridged, and differently applied, was subsequently used in his "Lectures on Poetry."

The entire expression of Montgomery's character, public and private, after he made a profession of religion, was a life-long commentary on the beauty and excellence of that charity which the letter and the spirit of the Gospel alike inculcate. It would, however, be an injustice to his memory, worse than even the imputation of bigotry, to allow it to be supposed that he was at any time or in any way tolerant of the open or covert advocacy of irreligion, indecency, or ill manners under the guise of "freedom of discussion." An opportunity of recording his sentiments on this difficult question, occurred after two convictions of the once notorious Richard Carlisle, a London bookseller, for vending blasphemous publications, in the month of October this year:—

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"Man is accountable to God alone for the opinions which he holds, whether moral or religious; but though it is the most monstrous and impotent of all usurpations for governments to pretend to interfere with such, — and all interference of this kind must be *mere* pretension, since opinions are as intangible as the spirit which is the seat of them, — yet man is unquestionably accountable to his fellow for the *promulgation* of these, when he thereby endangers the peace of society and the happiness of individuals. The Christian religion, by the concurrent testimony of lawyers and statesmen, is a part of the law of this land; and *if* a part, it can be no subordinate one, being of higher authority than any human institution, and absolutely incapable of yielding to local or temporary expedience. Its claims, therefore, must be paramount; and the law itself, deriving superior sanctions from this alliance, can only enforce due submission even to secular enactments by maintaining its divine origin and inviolability. By no statute in accordance with this religion, — by no statute acknowledged in our courts of justice, —can any man be punished for his sentiments concerning it, whatever they may be, from the rankest atheism to the most venial error; yet it appears, to us at least, perfectly reasonable, —perfectly consistent with toleration, in the fullest sense in which toleration can be consistent with public tranquillity, — that the law should have a power of punishing (for the purpose of restraining) offences committed in direct contempt of that which is so vital a part of itself. Others, and perhaps conscientious persons, may think differently; but at the hazard of being deemed bigots and advocates for intolerance, we are not ashamed to say, that we are glad to know that Christianity is part of the law of our native country, and that it cannot be reviled and brought into abhorrence by its enemies (who so far are the enemies of their country) with impunity."*

The removal of the Rev. Ignatius Montgomery from

* Iris, Oct. 26. 1821.

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the Moravian establishment at Fulneck to that at Ockbrook, near Derby, transferred one very powerful attraction for the poet from the former to the latter place, thus rendering the prospect of more frequent intercourse with his *alma mater* less promising than before. This was painful to his good friend and pastor, Mr. Ramftler, who says (Oct. 18.), "At all events, I hope to call you a *member* of this congregation while I am its minister: pray come as often as you can; few as your friends may be, I believe you are still *at home* here."

The Royal Society of Literature, having, among their premiums for 1822, announced one of fifty guineas for the best poem on "The Fall of Constantinople, in the Fifteenth Century," Dr. Cartwright, the secretary, wrote to Montgomery, inviting him, in complimentary terms, to become a competitor for the prize. To this he had no objection, provided he could be assured that his colleagues in the race were of equal poetical rank — men by whom it would be no discredit to be tested or beaten. In communicating this sentiment to his correspondent, he designated him on the letter with the usual "Esq." This blunder tickled Cartwright, who replied, "Were you possessed of more worldly wisdom than generally falls to the lot of a poet, it is not to be wondered at that you should '*squire* a D. D., *father of the living English poets;* whose poetical paternity bears date from the year 1762, and who a few years afterwards published 'Armine and Elvira, a Legendary Tale,' in rhyme, which went through seven editions at a time when few of his poetical sons and daughters now living could have held a pen." The correspondence was continued, but Montgomery did not meddle with the prize theme.

November. Mr. Everett took tea with Montgomery

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and other gentlemen, at the house of a mutual friend: the conversation was on different subjects. *Rev. Thomas Smith:* "Many persons talk of the harmony of Milton's numbers; for my part, I have never been able to discover anything of the kind." *Montgomery:* "You astonish me. His cadences are frequently striking, beyond those of almost any other writer in the English language. Even in portions that may appear dry or tedious to certain readers, as in the 'Angel's Address to Adam on the Creation,' there are passages that might remind a classical reader of Virgilian harmony." *Smith:* "Is it true that Milton was indebted to an Italian poet for the idea of 'Paradise Lost;' and that he has also borrowed from others?" *Montgomery:* "Some attempts have been made to detract from his claims to originality, by charging him in that way; and there is a tragedy*, from which he may have taken hints at least; but admitting this, it does not lessen his merit in the least. Any author might be proud to have had a thought borrowed from him by such a master-mind as Milton's; nor would he be poorer, but richer by the appropriation; as it happens in the case before us—for what would have been known of Andreini in this country, but for the reputation of 'Paradise Lost?' It is remarkable how the same subject will occur to different persons. I recollect being struck, when a boy at school, with a thought, which haunted me night and day, and on which I intended to construct a poem: the very same thought I afterwards met with in Milton; and was not a little angry at thus losing what, as to its originality, was as much mine as his. Had I proceeded, I might have been charged with plagiarism; as it was, I fretted awhile, and abandoned my scheme." *Smith:*

* The "Adamo" of Andreini.

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"What you have just mentioned reminds me of a similar case. I recollect being powerfully impressed with the thought that Edinburgh, where I then was, might, and in the course of time, probably would become desolate, like the once flourishing cities of Tyre and Sidon. I mentioned this to a friend, who surprised me by telling me that the idea was not my own; but one which he had endeavoured to impress upon me several years previously." *Montgomery:* "The truth is, the original idea belongs to neither of you, but to Bishop Berkeley, who, in the only rhyming composition of his, which I recollect to have seen, represents Literature as rising in the East, passing westward, and leaving the countries successively visited, to ignorance, superstition, and barbarism at the last; forsaking even Europe, finally to settle in America, as destined to be the permanent seat of science. This might perhaps have been imagined to be possible, previous to the invention of the art of printing; but it is now inconceivable that literature should ever perish in Europe. God has said to ignorance and superstition, 'thus far shall ye go — but no further.' Mrs. Barbauld, in her poem entitled 'Eighteen Hundred and Eleven,' has a prediction of a similar kind.* But it is my firm conviction that knowledge and science will ever continue to advance among us; and this is not a mere hasty opinion; I have thought long and much on the subject." *Smith:* "Is it not surprising that Milton should have so greatly over-es-

* "Night, Gothic night, again may shade the plains
Where power is seated, and where science reigns;
England, the seat of art, be only known
By the grey ruin and the mouldering stone;
That time may tear the garlands from her brow,
And Europe sit in dust, as Asia now," &c.
Barbauld's *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven.*

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timated his 'Paradise Regained'?" *Montgomery:* Perhaps so; but the merit of that work has seldom been duly recognised." *Everett:* "One disappointment which I have always experienced, when reading it, has arisen from the sparing manner in which the poet has treated the Passion of Christ, while he enters so largely into the Temptation in the Wilderness." *Montgomery:* "The Passion of our Saviour did not comport with the leading design, — which seems to have been to show that as the 'First Adam' *lost* Paradise in consequence of yielding to the Tempter in the Garden, so Paradise was *regained* by the same Tempter being foiled and overcome, by the 'Second Adam,' in the Wilderness." *Everett:* "Such was, unquestionably, the author's design; still, as that transaction formed but an inconsiderable part of the scheme of human redemption as compared with the atoning sacrifice of Christ, such design, so carried out, certainly appears unsatisfactory." *Montgomery:* "Besides, the Passion of our Redeemer is one of those subjects which defy poetic treatment in detail, as being too vast. Milton did write an ode on the 'Passion' when he was only about fourteen years of age, and in some parts of it he has equalled the productions of his riper years*; but it is incomplete — he stopped, where all must stop — and this, by the way, was a proof of his good sense: he found the subject transcended human skill in its mystery of meaning. In the sonnet on the 'Crucifixion,' which I have imitated from Crescembini, I was obliged to sacrifice cadence, poetic embellishment, everything, in order to fix the mind on the one simple but grand idea." *Smith:*

* Sir Egerton Brydges says, "This ode, or rather elegy, is unworthy of Milton."

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"Speaking of Italian poetry, do you not consider Petrarch to have been a man of superior genius?" *Montgomery:* "I do." *Smith:* "How, then, do you account for the fact that his poetry is so little understood, and still less relished, by the generality of readers in this country?" *Montgomery:* "It is, on the whole, no fault of his; for — to say nothing of the peculiarity of his subjects — few translators have done justice to him; indeed, he must be read in his own words to be fairly and fully estimated. One fact stamps him a man of genius — he raised and fixed the Italian language, even in such an age as that in which he lived; and that so effectually, that notwithstanding 450 years have passed away since he wrote, he is still a classic with his countrymen." *Smith:* "But while a learned, he was certainly a licentious character." *Montgomery:* "You may say so: he doubtless lived conformably to his time: and although the passion, or rather the sentiment of love, as he exhibits it in his sonnets, may have been in a great measure ideal, or what has been termed *platonic*, and apparently very refined, in expression, the poet is said to have been less chaste in his feelings and conduct." *Smith:* "The Italians are not remarkable for the introduction of religious expressions into their poetry." *Montgomery:* "Generally speaking, they are not: but several of them are distinguished, even in that respect. I say nothing of Dante; but Vittoria Colonna, whose works have not been rendered into English,—at least I never met with them—perhaps excels the whole of her brethren for devotional fervour: she carries you quite out of the ordinary region of poetry, into the very precincts of heaven!"

After a short interruption, the conversation was renewed. *Smith:* "There are certain individuals who

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can never be brought to attempt versification, whatever scholastic advantages they may have enjoyed: they seem incapable of entering into the merits of poetic feeling and composition." *Montgomery:* "That is matter of every-day observation, though not of confession." Mr. S. smiled, but dropped his head, as if he had received a shot; recollecting, apparently, the acknowledgment he had just made of his insensibility to the harmony of Milton's numbers. But his good humour was as unfailing as his conversation, and he immediately rallied to the question. *Smith:* "There are, doubtless, on the other hand, many geniuses prematurely buried in every age, — lost to the world, for want of opportunities to develop themselves." *Montgomery:* "I entertain on the whole a different opinion; and am inclined to believe that the world sustains little or no loss from that cause. I mean, of course, genius of the highest order, and we shall never lack a sufficient supply of the others. Would a Shakspeare, a Milton, a Newton have slumbered in obscurity under any circumstances? or, amidst the thousands of volumes beside, could their works ever be mislaid, or neglected, so as to be forgotten or lost? Such minds *will* work themselves into notice." *Everett:* "Perhaps if Mr. Smith will take the trouble to look around him, he will not find one among the persons with whom he may be acquainted, possessing supereminent intellectual endowments, and at the same time buried in obscurity; the same remark will, I think, apply to the scope of observation enjoyed by each of us." *Montgomery:* "Mr. Smith may not only survey the circle in which he now moves, but the wider one of his whole life, and I think he will not discover a single intellectual jewel of the first water thus lying hid and overlooked." *Smith:* I still think Gray's beautiful lines are applicable to the frequent fate of concealed genius:—

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"'Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air!'"

Montgomery: "Undoubtedly it is so. But do not misapprehend my meaning, when I say that a Newton or a Shakspeare would not eventually have been concealed under any circumstances. I certainly do not mean to affirm that if the latter, for example, had never learned to read or write, he would have made that figure in the world which he does at present; but he would have been known as Shakspeare at Stratford-on-Avon; he would not, because he could not, have 'blushed unseen' there: though, without a knowledge of letters, he might have been unknown to the world beyond. It is the merest truism to say, that the recognition and reward of a man of genius must depend upon circumstances — for so must they in respect of every individual, be his mental energy much or little. Or, to take another illustration, we cannot for an instant suppose that a man of genius born in those parts of the world where the light of Gospel truth never shed a single ray, will shine out with the same effect as one of similar power placed under a course of Christian instruction in a Christian land; nor is there the same probability that native genius will be developed to the same extent, *mutatis mutandis*, in Papal as in Protestant countries. Among the manuscripts which have been found in the ruins of Herculaneum, there is perhaps not one by which the world is likely to be either much interested or benefited." *Everett:* "The names of the authors of some works which have perished through the ravages of time, or other accidents, are still preserved, and are said to have represented genius in their

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day." *Montgomery:* "And these very men, of whom we know little besides the names, may have instructed or stimulated others, who have survived in their works." *Smith:* "I have lately seen an exact *fac-simile* of one of the manuscripts to which you allude." *Montgomery:* "There is no chemical or mechanical process, I am afraid, by means of which they will ever be able to unravel the whole of these ancient documents: however, as I said, we are not likely to lose much information of value, judging from some specimens on morals and on music already deciphered."

Few men, at this period, were better qualified to draw Montgomery out in conversation, in a mixed company, than Mr. Smith; who, having the entire esteem of his friend, generally adopted the interrogatory method. On one occasion, and after a few moments' silence in the party, he directed his peculiarly peering eye towards his neighbour, and thus started a subject. *Smith:* "What is your opinion, Mr. Montgomery, of Hume and Gibbon, as authors?" *Montgomery:* "Their style, and indeed their merits in every way, are entirely dissimilar, though perhaps equally attractive. You feel buoyed up as well as borne along by the eloquence of Gibbon, as if by a swelling wave; he has both imagination and feeling, as well as skill: Hume is more formal, didactic, and apparently without human sympathy in what happens to connect him with his reader." *Everett:* "Hume appears to me to possess more cogency in his method of reasoning than Gibbon, while he is not less obviously indebted to art — not to say artifice—for his success." *Montgomery:* "But if the latter sometimes exhibits the cunning of the serpent, with its fangs and poison, he is almost as glittering with its brightest colours." *Everett:* "I always mistrust Hume, as a historian, from a circumstance

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mentioned to me by Dr. Adam Clarke, who called the earlier part, at least, of Hume's 'History of England' a 'work of imagination;' for when the Doctor's connection with the Record Office commenced, he found there an officer who told him that, although the historian obtained leave to inspect original documents, the party never saw him in the place but once, when he remarked that he had obtained the *entré* rather to keep up his credit as an original investigator, than on account of any practical use which he meant to make of the Records themselves! The Doctor added, that some ground was afforded to this imputation by the fact that Hume, in his published work, frequently only refers to the name of the author or title of the book cited as authority, without specifying either chapter or page." *Smith:* "If such be the ascertained fact, it deserves publicity." *Everett:* "I communicated the information to Mr. Bigland, the author of 'Letters on Ancient History,' who thanked me for it.* Dr. Clarke thought more favourably of the trustworthiness of Smollet's 'Continuation' of Hume's History." *Montgomery:* "Whatever foundation there may be for the statement which you have just made, Hume enjoys the merit of

* "Of the anecdote relating to Hume, on the evidence of Dr. Clarke, whose authority is certainly unquestionable, I was totally ignorant, and feel myself greatly obliged to you for the communication. Indeed I never had an exalted opinion of Hume as a historian; and I believe I have not made many references to his works; although I did not much doubt of his accuracy and veracity where religion was out of the question. A writer, however, who is so completely negligent in the use of such opportunities of research as he appears to have obtained, can merit very little regard; although I have often seen him quoted by some of the most celebrated writers both English and foreign. Had I possessed the same advantages, I should certainly have set a higher value upon them."—Bigland's *Letter to J. E.*

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having compiled a most interesting History from very dry materials, many of which lay widely scattered through various out-of-the-way works, with which he had made himself familiar; and those persons who would test the accuracy of the information given, must and will look for themselves at the original authorities, where they are to be found." *Everett:* "As it is not merely entertainment, but truth, which we seek in such works, would it not be better to read Rapin, dry as he is, or Andrews, or Henry, upon whom you may depend?" *Montgomery:* "Undoubtedly, in some cases, it would." *Smith:* "The Roman Catholic Dr. Lingard has commenced a History of England, in which I am sorry to see he has not done justice to the character of Sir William Wallace." *Everett:* "Had Mr. Smith been born on this side of the Tweed, perhaps he might have thought somewhat differently himself on that point." *Smith:* "Perhaps I might: but as it is, I think the historian scarcely deals fairly with the Scottish hero." *Montgomery:* "To do strict justice to the character of Wallace seems hardly possible; the story of his life is so intermixed with fiction: Lingard has evidently paid great attention to the evidence of plodding writers who are most likely to have arrived at truth."

James Montgomery to John Holland.

"'Iris' Office, Nov. 30. 1821.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"Your lines on the Seal shall appear in Tuesday's 'Iris.' The former [verses on another subject] I cannot determine to publish, though I dare say they are favourite thoughts and favourite forms of expression with yourself. This, however, is not wonderful; we seldom please others where we have uncommonly pleased ourselves, because in

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the latter case there is generally some particularity, incommunicable on the one hand and unattainable on the other, whereby the reader can never get into the mind of the author so identically as to see, hear, feel, and think as he does. I am not sure that you will understand this clumsy exposure of one of the most mortifying secrets in writing for the public. But, in truth, pastoral poetry is so antiquated that it is scarcely tolerable in any shape, in this age of refinement in the opposite extreme. Your piece wants the merit of originality in the conception, which is borrowed from Waller, and though pretty enough in him, was never worth stealing or wasting any poetical power upon it. Nor is love in a dream original even in Waller. It occurs repeatedly in romance. The execution of your poem, though very elaborate and in many passages exquisite, is not on the whole happy.

"The stanza is heavy at the end, and too light in the head. There are many unallowable phrases, some of which I have marked with pencil for your reconsideration, as I mean to enclose it in this sheet. I have turned over a new leaf, and will therefore find no more fault at present. If you will let me have the verses again at any time, perhaps I may find some more motes in your sunshine. I have no time, nor indeed any very strong inclination, to gratify your curiosity respecting the old lumber in the 'Iris' of the last century; but I will briefly reply to the queries in your note.

"Mr. J. P. Smith was editor of the 'Iris' during my second imprisonment only. The epistles on the Pleasures of Imprisonment, though transmitted to him in the first instance, were, in my mind at least, addressed to another friend, at Manchester, though they did not meet his eye otherwise than in the newspaper. 'The more voluminous work,' noticed in the preface to 'Prison Amusements,' was a novel, in four volumes, written at various intervals between 1790 and 1796, and entirely remodelled in the latter. It has never seen daylight in print (nor in any other sense for twenty years past), nor shall it. The 'Eastern Story' is

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precisely in the state in which it was offered to Lane, the bookseller, and rejected, because it wanted I don't know how many pages of making a volume of honest weight and standard measure. The first sketch of the 'Loss of the Locks' you will find in the 'Iris' for 1799. When I lay my hands on the printed sheets, I will let you have a copy, though it was not completed at press. I thought I had given Mrs. S. one, but if not, so much the better. If it will be any consolation under those discouragements which I occasionally place in your way, as a poet, believe me that you know nothing of the miseries and disappointments that I experienced *before* I was your age;—they sometimes almost broke my heart. But I rejoice *now* in the retrospect, that they *did* happen to save me from worse consequences, had I always succeeded according to my ignorant wishes. Whatever you may think now of my taste or caprice, I am never more truly, than when thus exercising your patience,

"Your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. John Holland, Sheffield Park."

The following are minutes of a conversation at the house of Mr. Waterhouse, surgeon, in Sheffield.* A gentleman present asked Mr. W. whether any work of a professional character had lately appeared in Sheffield? *Waterhouse:* "None; with the exception of Dr. Knight's pamphlet in reference to the Infirmary."† *Montgomery:* "But Sheffield has been connected with medical literature, for Dr. Buchan's 'Domestic Medicine' was written in this town, and under the very

* Mr. Thomas Waterhouse was a respectable and gentlemanly member of the profession. He took an active part in the foundation and success of the Sheffield Medical School, in the library of which institution there is a marble bust of him. He died young.

† "A Collection of Papers relative to the Establishment of a Fever-Ward in the Sheffield Infirmary."

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roof of our house; his shop was that occupied now by the Misses Gales in the Hartshead. Perhaps you may consider the honour of either local or personal association with such a man rather equivocal! I remember seeing the old gentleman when I first went to London: he was of venerable aspect, neat in his dress, his hair tied behind with a large black ribbon, and a gold-headed cane in his hand, quite realising my idea of an Esculapian dignitary." *Everett:* "Did you ever speak to him?" *Montgomery:* "No; he was quite out of my reach; but I looked upon him with respect as a man *who had published a book.*" *Waterhouse:* "Buchan's book has had its day; and whatever may have been its merits, it has produced some mischievous effects. In one of the Scottish editions there was an astounding misprint, in which a prescription, containing *one hundred ounces of laudanum*, instead of that number of *drops*, is recommended." *Montgomery* (laughing): "Why, such a dose would be enough to poison a regiment of soldiers." *Waterhouse:* "By the way, Mr. Montgomery, you must be careful what you say in the 'Iris' on the 'opium eaters;' for one of my patients has felt an insuperable objection against swallowing the smallest portion of laudanum—a drug which in her case is absolutely necessary." *Montgomery:* "I was so absolutely *possessed* by the 'Confessions,' when I first read them in the 'London Magazine,' that I could not divest my mind of the horror of opium-taking, which, after all, is a most dreadful practice. I was shown a letter on the subject, about two years since, which, although I did not then know the writer, could not, I felt convinced, have been dictated by any one but Coleridge, as was the fact. The description there given of the remorse and agony of the victim, surpassed anything I had ever met with in real

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life."* *Waterhouse:* "Dr. Thomas Short, who in 1734 published the 'History of Mineral Waters,' a work of some note in its day, was a physician at Sheffield, where, he says, there is a spa, 'a wretched heavy one, in Pond Lane, the product of coal.'" *Montgomery:* "I know nothing of its gravity or its source; but having often bathed in it many years ago, I used to think it excessively cold." After some remarks on the health of a minister who appeared to be injuring himself by too close attention to study, and another who was satisfied with the discharge of his humble duties as a village preacher, Montgomery said Jane Taylor's description of the "Poor Itinerant" was excellent, adding, that "health ought not to be lightly sacrificed either to learning or preaching." *Everett:* "The *body* has not, generally speaking, always had that share of attention and honour which Scripture-principles require. It is, indeed, shocking to hear how slightingly some good men—persons really possessing superior sanctity of spirit—speak of the body, and to see how badly they use it, as though God really required 'murder for sacrifice.' Our Lord Jesus Christ himself has highly honoured humanity by assuming our common nature, which he took upon Him for glorification as well as for suffering; and when we know that He will as certainly redeem the body from the grave, as He has already redeemed the soul from sin, and when we consider how it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, it surely behoves us to speak of it with respect as well as to guard it from profanity, pollution, or ruin, till God himself shall lay his hand upon it for affliction or demolition." *Montgomery:* "Doubtless, health is a great

* See Cottle's "Recollections of Coleridge," vol. ii. p. 125.

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blessing; and it is our duty to guard against the unnecessary loss of it." *Everett:* "Is it your intention to attend the Bible Society meeting at Rotherham, on Thursday?" *Montgomery:* "No, sir, I have not had an invitation; and, whether I had been invited or not, I might, according to the opinion expressed by the noble chairman (Lord Milton) last year, perhaps be deemed an intruder!"* *Everett:* "I shall surely then be regarded in that light; yet I mean to be present. Will you attend the meeting at Retford the week after?" *Montgomery:* "I am in a strait between two—letters; I have already said N in my mind; and I am afraid I shall have to add O to it in my reply to the invitation; and yet the good people there ought to be helped, for they have struggled nobly to get up a

* His lordship argued that this and every society should be entirely self-dependent, and not invite the aid of speakers from a distance. Mr. Everett, having been present, and believing that the worthy chairman had scarcely viewed the subject in all its bearings when he expressed so peremptory an opinion, addressed him at length by letter, to which a frank and courteous reply was returned:—

"SIR,

"The wide range of the topics embraced in your letter, and the fulness with which you have treated them, will, I hope, form a sufficient apology for my not having made an earlier reply, and must, at the same time, preclude me from entering upon more than one or two of the heads into which it is divided. Though I agree with much of what you have stated, my assent can hardly be given to the whole, but, nevertheless, I still hope to profit by all your observations." [His lordship then proceeds to discussion; after which he concludes with] "I had intended adverting to some of the other topics alluded to in your letter, but the multiplicity of business I have had lately will, I hope, afford a sufficient excuse for not pursuing the subject further.

"I remain, your very faithful servant,

"MILTON.

"Rev. J. Everett, Sheffield."

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meeting against the most strenuous opposition. The Bible Society appears doomed to pass through a fiery trial just now, and it behoves all its true friends to stand boldly by it."

The lines entitled "Abdallah and Sabat," originally prefixed to his friend Thomas Foster Barham's drama of the "Christian Martyr," belong also to this year; as well as those "On a Watch Pocket worked by A. L." (Alice Lister, afterwards Mrs. Hayter.)

The "Sonnet imitated from the Italian of Gabriello Fiamma, on the Sepulture of Christ," is dated 1821. The storming of Galacz by the Turks, and the dreadful enormities committed by them in that city, led Montgomery to allude to the frequency with which the Tuscan poets had derived their themes from actions where Mussulmans had been the heroes. *Montgomery:* "About the middle of the seventeenth century the Turks carried the vengeance of Mahomet into those countries which had previously witnessed the march of the Crusaders; indeed, they were more than once apparently within a point of planting the crescent on the ramparts of Vienna, while their flags, like baleful meteors, 'flamed amazement' over the waves from Jaffa to Oran." *Holland:* "And but for the bravery of John Sobieski and his band of gallant Poles, the destinies of Europe might have been altered by such an event." *Montgomery:* "And look how Europe has requited Poland! That was the last era of the age of chivalry; and the valorous exploits, by sea and land, of Christian warriors against the infidels, furnished themes and lent inspiration to lyric poets of the highest order that have appeared since Greece was in her glory. The odes of Filicaja, especially, on the siege of Vienna, are unrivalled in modern song; and there is scarcely an Italian poet of eminence, during

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the period when the isles of the Mediterranean had to repel the turbaned invaders, who has not gathered his proudest laurels in the field of Turkish warfare." *Holland:* "Have you translated any specimen from Filicaja?" *Montgomery:* "No; but I delight to read him; there is no poet who, in the sublimity of his style, so much resembles the prophet Isaiah." *Holland:* "But little interest has been felt, for nearly a century past, in the threatened or possible aggressions of Mahomet on Christendom: and less than might, perhaps, have been expected, in the obviously waning influence of the crescent." * *Montgomery:* "The Ottoman power, previous to the French Revolution, appeared to be declining by means of intestine broils, rather than in consequence of assaults from without; and many persons anticipated its speedy dissolution. But the downfal of the Grand Turk, like that of the Pope, though foretold every year by the stars and their infallible interpreters, Francis Moore and the rest of the almanac makers, has not yet come to pass; though it may probably have been accelerated by a century in consequence of Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt."

* And yet once more the conflict between the "crescent and the cross," involves the leading European powers in anomalous warfare! At this moment (April, 1855) the allied forces of England and France, mutually resenting the designs of Russia on Constantinople, and in avowed sympathy with the Turk, are bombarding the strong fortress of Sebastopol.

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CHAP. LI.

1822.

LETTER TO GEORGE BENNET. — CONVERSATION. — MISS ROBERTS, AND VERSES ON "SHEFFIELD MANOR."— CARDINAL WOLSEY. — LETTER TO DAVID LAING.—LIGHT AND DARKNESS IN A MEETING. — MONTGOMERY AT MATLOCK.—AT NOTTINGHAM.—"SONGS OF ZION."— CONVERSATION. — MISSIONARY MEETING.—A DROP OF WATER. — LETTER FROM MR. EVERETT. — JOURNEY INTO DERBYSHIRE. — INCIDENTAL OBJECTS OF INTEREST.

ANXIETY about the life of one dear friend in Sheffield, and wishes for the welfare of another at the antipodes, occupied Montgomery's mind at the beginning of this year.

James Montgomery to George Bennet.

"Sheffield, Jan. 9. 1822.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have received a sudden notice of an opportunity, by a vessel to Port Jackson, of communicating with you, and I write, as usual, in as much haste as if my paper lay on the back of a swallow in full flight, and I had to express, in a few seconds, the feelings and events of as many months. Days, and weeks, and months, and years, indeed, continue their course with me and my connections here; but there is such a family resemblance among these children of time, that the features of one describe generally the features of all; and if I tell you what I am, what I think, what I do, and what I suffer, even for one hour, you will know pretty

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well what has been the history of twelve months with me. And yet, what have the last twelve months brought to pass in my little circle of fellowships of the heart? *You* removed to the uttermost parts of the earth; but yet I will believe you see the sun and breathe the air of this poor world! *Two* of my nearest friends beside have been further removed where they cannot return to me, but whither, from many warnings, I know that I must soon go to them. May it be where rest for souls is ever found! A fourth—our dear, our inestimable, friend, R. Hodgson — at this time lies dangerously ill; often, indeed, has he been so, and afterwards restored, more frail, but yet more precious to us than before; but this time, indeed, he appears to draw nigh to the gates of death: his soul, however, appears proportionately to draw nigh to heaven, and, while the outward man decays visibly, the inward man is renewed day by day. The light within, the light from heaven, shines clearer as the darkness deepens round it from without, and I will believe that the grace of God which passeth understanding keeps his heart and mind during this sore trial of affliction, and will keep both till his happy spirit stands before the throne, clad in his Redeemer's righteousness, and ransomed by his blood. I had lately a most delightful, but affecting, conversation with him. His meekness, humility, resignation, and humble but unshaken hope in the promises of the Gospel as yea and amen to him through the only Saviour of sinners, — these gracious fruits of the Spirit were manifested to me in lovelier colours than I have ever seen them in him during his comparative health, and in the full exercise of all his benevolent and pious duties, — though in the faithful, simple, and unostentatious performance of these, I think I never saw a more exemplary Christian. He made use of one expression which I may repeat; you and I are old enough to feel its awful and instructive truth, — 'We creep about the brink of the grave, and one crumb after another of earth falls in beneath our feet, — at length *we* go!' But though I thus write concerning one whose life and welfare here are so desirable

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to you, and whom you would resign into no hands but those of a merciful and faithful Creator and Redeemer, we will not give him up till the Lord hath indeed taken him away — taken him to Himself. How his loss, should it now occur, will be felt in his range of usefulness, we may well anticipate, by the actual feeling of the loss of your countenance, talents, example, and exertions in many a good work still carried on here, but under disadvantages which you will lament to learn, though nothing has yet happened to induce me to change the perfect conviction of my mind, against all the murmuring and remonstrations of my heart, that you did right and well to obey the call that deprived us of your invaluable society and services. The only advice I recollect having ever given you that could at all influence the decision of your choice on the subject, as far as I recollect, was this:—'If you find freedom in your own mind to go, go in the name, and the fear, and the blessing of God!' Had I counselled you otherwise, I should have been unworthy of the confidence which you placed in me. I refer to this, because I have reason to fear that some of our best friends think hardly of me, on account of your departure from a scene of blessed employments, and enjoyments too, of which you were the life and soul and spirit, so to speak, in the language of men. I am sure *you* will not blame me, whatever others do, on this ground. I was no angel with a flaming sword to drive you forth from this paradise, in which you were so happily engaged in rearing flowers and fruits of righteousness, and watering, and pruning, and watching over the trees which the Lord had planted. It was *because* you had been so long and so successfully engaged in a place like the garden of Eden, that *He* had need of you in the wilderness. O may He by His Spirit enable you so to cultivate the waste and thorny ground, that the desert may rejoice and blossom as the rose! I will send you an imitation of the 72nd Psalm, which contains glorious prophecies, in the accomplishment of which the isles afar off—the isles even of the South Sea, unknown when these were uttered—are eternally interested. There is no particular

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intelligence, either of a public or private nature, at present to communicate. . . . . The Lord bless you and keep you, and make his face to shine upon you. Amen.

"Your affectionate friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"George Bennet, Esq., Otaheite, South Sea."

Jan. 25. We met Montgomery at tea, with fifteen ladies, at the house of our kind and hospitable friend, Mr. Jones, draper, Sheffield. *Montgomery:* "What do you think, Mr. Everett, of the verses on 'Sheffield Manor,' in last Tuesday's 'Iris?'" *Everett:* "I was not particularly struck with them at first; I liked them better on a second perusal: pray whose are they?" *Montgomery:* "I suspect they were written by a young lady of this town.* I am only surprised that you did not immediately perceive their merit: one does not often read oneself into admiration of a poem that does not at first arrest attention. I have rarely read anything of the kind that pleased me more than those few verses: they exhibit such an air of elegance and touching simplicity, that I thought I would almost have given two fingers to have written them myself." *Holland:* "I have read them with pleasure; but still I suspect some portion of your admiration arose from what you brought *to* the verses by association; otherwise, *why* do they interest you so deeply?" *Montgomery:* "There is a certain indefinable charm in genuine poetry, which often pleases because it is indefinable; and if I am required to explain *why* these verses pleased me so much, I can only answer as I have done—their effect upon my mind was irresistible. I wondered how she would end her composition; but she left off most happily just at the right

* Miss Roberts, cousin to the authoress of the "Royal Exile."

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place: one stanza less, and the whole had been defective —one more, and the spell had been broken by satiety. I walked up to the Manor this afternoon, for the purpose of testing my enjoyment of the verses on the spot: and I *did* enjoy the repetition of them; for although but little of the original mansion of the Talbots now remains, and even the effect of that is spoiled by the monotonous roof of a barn-like building adjacent, the hills — 'the everlasting hills'—are there unchanged; and upon these I walked, viewing the ruins from every point." *Everett:* "I am sorry I did not read the verses with more attention, but I shall now return to them with fresh interest." *Montgomery:* "And I hope you will *not* enjoy them, for not perceiving their merits at first. What can be finer than the lines in which, after catching, as it were from the voice of the spirit of Mary Queen of Scots, the prediction that some minstrel would rescue her name from dishonour in connexion with those fair scenes, the poetess says: —

"'But ev'n while yet she spake
Strange darkness fell between,
As if some mighty wings
Had folded o'er the scene;
And I heard a stealing sound
From beneath that pall sublime,
And trembled as I heard —
It was the tread of Time.'"

"The idea embodied in that verse," added Montgomery, "exceeds almost anything of the kind which I remember — except, perhaps, a passage in Kirke White's 'Remains,' which may possibly have suggested it: —

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"'I heard the waters roar,
I heard the flood of ages pass away.
O thou stern spirit, who dost dwell
In thine eternal cell,
Noting, grey Chronicler! the silent years—
I saw thee rise—I saw the scroll complete
Thou spak'st, and at thy feet
The universe gave way!'"

"There is a veil of sublimity thrown over the sentiment conveyed by those words, like that which hides from us the secrets of the eternal world." *Holland:* "'Sheffield Manor' is hardly less strikingly identified with the history of Cardinal Wolsey: do you recollect old Storer's stanza?—

"'By short and heavie journeys, I was brought
To Sheffield-parke; there taking sweet repose,
Where true nobility intirely sought
T'ennoble griefe, and entertaine my woes;
O, how doth Heaven the course of cares dispose,
By enterchange of honor and of pleasure,
To augment our miseries exceeding measure!'"*

Montgomery: "No; but I can never forget the couplet of our old local Quaker poet, Robert Barnard:—

"'Here Wolsey, doomed a sad reverse to bear,
Drank long oblivion to a world of care.'"

Holland: "There is a tradition, popularised by Malone in his edition of Shakspeare, to the effect that the Cardinal wilfully accelerated his own death; it is hinted

* Life and Death of Thomas Wolsey, Cardinal, 1599.

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at in your couplet, and I have been misled by it to say, in my poem of 'Sheffield Park,'—

"'Here haughty Wolsey drank the poisoned bowl.'"

Montgomery: "Mr. Hunter says nothing of the sort in his very circumstantial account of the fallen prelate's sickness and death." *Holland:* "He had mentioned and explained the source of the error in a previous work.* You would find the bulk of the ruins at the Manor much diminished since your previous visit thither. There has not only been the ordinary mischief from time and storms, but much wanton spoliation; and some persons, who ought to have known better, finding it more economical to pull *down* stones ready dressed from the walls, than to raise them *up* from the adjacent quarry, have accelerated the work of demolition: only a few days ago, an immense mass of the building which had been thus undermined was blown down." *Montgomery:* "It is a pity that this voluntary injury should be done to a pile which is not only historically interesting, but which marks a spot that may be said to have become poetic ground."

In the following letter the Sheffield Poet acknowledges the receipt of another reprint of old Scottish verse from the editor, Mr. Laing, who seems to have been aware—as well he might—that some of the matter would hardly be to the taste of his correspondent:—

* "Who wrote Cavendish's Life of Wolsey?" 1814. The original MS. of Cavendish's affecting narrative does not contain the words—"At which time it was apparent he had poisoned himself;" they have been interpolated in some copies. Dr. Pegge was the first to repel *this* reflection on the Cardinal's memory.—See *Gentleman's Mag.*, vol. xxv. p. 27. 1755.

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James Montgomery to David Laing.

"Sheffield, March 21. 1822.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have to thank you for another curious volume of old Scottish poetry, of which you are the editor, — the works of Alexander Scott. The rust of antiquity on medals converts brass into gold, and the obsolete phraseology of old poems frequently confers on them something more precious than Time has taken away by rendering them almost unintelligible to plain readers. There is much, I acknowledge frankly, in the productions of Alexander Scott, which I wish that the canker of age had utterly eaten away, and then the sterling remainder would be of incomparably more worth than blended as it is with pernicious alloy. But it is not my business, in this return of thanks for your repeated liberality to one who has no claim upon it beyond the gratitude which it has excited, to criticise censoriously the writings of this very ingenious and sprightly author, whose faults are rather to be ascribed to the bad taste and gross manners of a rude period, than to peculiar depravity in himself. What is excellent in him I can sincerely admire, and as sincerely thank you for introducing it to my notice. With regard to my own rhyming labours, to which you kindly allude, they seem to have come to a premature end, or at least to be suspended, so far as respects themes of popular and splendid interest.

I am, truly, your obliged friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"David Laing, Esq., Edinburgh."

April 14. Mr. Everett called upon Montgomery after his return from the Wesleyan missionary meeting at Liverpool. *Everett:* "I have seen Mr. Newton, who tells me the gas-lights went out while you were speaking in Pitt Street Chapel?" *Montgomery:* "They did so. We had been about fifteen minutes in the meeting,

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when Dr. Clarke, who was the chairman, announced me as the next speaker. From the very first, I felt persuaded we should be in darkness, but no one else seemed to be aware of it; so no provision was made. The gas burnt dimmer and dimmer; till, at length, out it went, and there was one wilderness of night before us; and had it not been for the effect of two or three candles on the platform, the congregation might have been alarmed, and the consequences serious. At the moment when the gas ceased to burn, the Doctor said, 'Come, come, though dark *without*, there is still light within:' I caught the expression; and as darkness and light are terms of easy use in illustration, and comprehensible by all, they suggested a train of thought which I had indulged on a former occasion, and which produced a good effect in this instance. I was, for a moment, alarmed and arrested by a crash, arising from the breaking of a seat-back by the crowd; and again by a man, who, in trying to place lights in a chandelier, brought his candle so near, that it barely missed touching my face; and it was well that it did so, for I was in a terribly agitated and *combustible* state! I knew the people would not expect me to talk less than an hour, after having sent for me from such a distance: accordingly, I proceeded through every interruption — commencing with the twilight, settling down into darkness, rising again as the light reappeared, and concluding with the full blaze of the renovated illumination;" and by reciting his own elegant version of the 72nd Psalm, of which the learned chairman solicited a copy.* A very similar

* Dr. Clarke has appended Montgomery's stanzas to his own notes on the 72nd Psalm, adding: "I need not tell the intelligent reader that he has seized the spirit and exhibited some of the peculiar beauties of the Hebrew bard; though, to use his own

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accident occurred on one occasion, while Montgomery was speaking in a meeting at Hull. While in Liverpool, he was taken by a friend to see several of the public institutions, with which he was much pleased, especially with the museum, into which, said he, "the merchants will delight to pour their treasured curiosities after voyages to every part of the world, and to see their names affixed to their donations as permanent memorials." But, perhaps, the greatest treat which he enjoyed, was in listening to a sermon by the Rev. Thomas Fletcher, of Blackburn, from the text, "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."—Numb. xiv. 21. "Although I had repeatedly read the passage before, I never," he remarked, "saw it in so vivid and interesting a point of view as that in which the preacher placed it. A similar form of expression occurs in other parts of Scripture, and the same universal spread of truth and righteousness is often predicted; but nowhere else is it accompanied with a like peculiarity of circumstances—these circumstances alone, considering the position of the Israelites when the prophecy was uttered, render it one of the most remarkable in the Book of God."

He was pledged to be at Matlock on the 24th of April, previous to which he attended and spoke at three public meetings; one of them in connection with the Christian school, in which he had "learnt many useful lessons; one of which was, obedience; another, that he was not bound to do well, but only to do the best he could in the service of God." While he was speaking, "a devout soldier" came into the meeting: "Now,"

words in his letter to me, his 'hand trembled to touch the harp of Zion.' I take the liberty here to register a wish, which I have strongly expressed to himself, that he would favour the Church of God with a metrical version of the whole" [of the Psalms].

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said Montgomery, turning to him, "I am at ease, since my seconder has come to my aid; I determined not to quit the field, in the confidence that he would presently arrive here. I felt like Wellington on the field of Waterloo, who, though hard pressed, determined, if possible, to maintain the fight till the arrival of Blucher, when victory became certain: and though I am far from being disposed to arrogate to myself anything like the wisdom and the prowess of a Wellington, I will not retract the compliment I have paid to my seconder as a Blucher, who, however he may have used his military weapons, has ability sufficient to wield well the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, for I have not only seen *that* sword so used by him, but have felt its edge."

May 12. Montgomery visited Nottingham, and spoke at the Methodist missionary meeting. During his stay in that town, he heard William Dawson, the celebrated "local preacher," a man remarkable not only for the vigorous originality of his mind, but for the deep and healthful tone of thought, feeling, and piety which characterised his addresses, whether in the pulpit or on the platform. The preacher said something which excited the risibility of some of his hearers, and Montgomery, who had a strong dislike to anything resembling levity on such occasions, was himself tempted to smile, but, said he, "I was afraid and ashamed of either setting or following such an example; for there was a little sharp-eyed girl, gravely watching, as I thought, every motion of my face, and whose glances I caught as if they had been shot from the eye of a rattlesnake." In the week following, Mr. Dawson preached in Sheffield, when Montgomery, with "the common people, heard him gladly," and still further evinced the interest he felt in the success and object of the sermon, by holding the collecting-

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box to receive contributions towards the support of the missions. On his way from Nottingham, he spent a week with his brother Ignatius at Ockbrook; but instead of "burying himself in the woods and lanes there, as he had hoped to have done, he was hardly once able to get out of the sight of friends." He added, "during the last month, my work has been cut out for me by others, almost hour by hour; and so harassing as well as incessant has it been, that I have felt as if I were 'running the gauntlet,' amongst cart-wheels, coach-wheels, and waggon-wheels, with difficulty escaping being crushed by some of them: if I get over the Sunday-school Union meeting, I shall be completely exhausted."

On his return to Sheffield, May 18., he found the *proof sheets* of his little volume of "Songs of Zion" awaiting him. We have ample minutes of conversations relative to the progress of this work, and embodying the author's opinions of psalm-metrists and hymnologists; but, as he subsequently published various essays on those subjects, we omit less interesting details. Immediately on the appearance of the book, each of the biographers received a copy, "with the author's kind regards;" and soon afterwards Mr. Everett obtained, what he still more highly prized, a parcel accompanied by the following note:—"I send the manuscript of 'Songs of Zion.' It is the genuine original, from which the transcript was made for the press. Some slight variations were introduced. Your friend, James Montgomery." Although these "Imitations of Psalms" cost the poet a large amount of labour, and that labour expended on a favourite theme at the best period of his life, the experiment can hardly be said to have been successful. The author, indeed, only ventured "to hope, that, by avoiding the rugged literality

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of some, and the diffusive paraphrases of others [who had gone before him], he may, in a few instances, have approached nearer than either of them have generally done to the ideal mode of what devotional poems, in a modern tongue, grounded upon the subjects of ancient psalms, yet suited for Christian edification, ought to be." That some of these compositions are eminently beautiful, and, as such, will always be admired and sung, cannot be denied; that founded on the 72nd Psalm, for example, is one of the most mellifluous and perfect *hymns* in the language. But, between the loss of the full meaning of the Hebrew text, which may be embodied even in the "rugged literality" of Sternhold and Hopkins, and the operose fidelity of such "diffuse paraphrases" as those of Merrick "and others," to say nothing of the freer spiritualisations of Dr. Watts—the acknowledged value of a translation of inspired song, and the evangelical spirit and purposes of a Christian hymn, are alike liable to be sacrificed in mere "Imitations*," combining, as they must, the least characteristic features of both those species of devotional composition. Montgomery's own "Original Hymns" are a sufficient illustration of this fact.†

* Some judicious remarks on what was called by Cowley "imitation," in contradistinction to "translation," and "verbal version," as exemplified in rendering a classic poet, will be found in Dryden's Preface to "Ovid's Epistles."

† Cowper has some excellent remarks on this subject in the preface to his translation of "Homer:" — "Fidelity is indeed of the very essence of translation," says he; "and the term itself implies it. For which reason, if we suppress the sense of our original, and force into its place our own, we may call our work an *imitation* if we please, or perhaps a *paraphrase*, but it is no longer the same author only in a different dress, and, therefore, it is not translation. Should a painter, professing to draw the likeness of a beautiful woman, give her more or fewer features than

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May 23. Montgomery dined at the house of Mr. Holy, with several Wesleyan ministers, after a missionary sermon by Dr. Adam Clarke. The preacher had said, "there was a time when there was not a single *Christian* to be found in Britain; at this moment I believe there is but one avowed *Heathen*, for I do know one such man, who professes to worship Jupiter, and who, at my own table, before he tasted the meat himself, rose from his seat, and put a piece of it into the fire as a sacrifice!" The question having arisen as to whom the Doctor alluded, Montgomery said, "I supposed him to allude to William Taylor, of Norwich, the early friend of Southey, a man of letters, and an admirer of the old Greek theosophy. He published a translation of Plato, under the patronage of the late Duke of Norfolk." *Everett:* "The love of singularity — an unwillingness to act like other men — is probably the leading motive to such strange conduct." *Montgomery:* "Vanity has, no doubt, its influence on his faith as well as his practice." A gentleman present laid on the table a copy of the pirated edition of Lord Byron's "Cain," saying that he had just given eighteenpence for it. "In the surreptitious publication of this very book," said Montgomery, taking it up, "we have an exemplification of the spirit of infidelity; and of the conduct to which it would lead, if there were no legal barriers. Though the poem ought never to have been printed at all, that is no justification of the dishonest publisher of this edition, who had sagacity and selfishness enough to see that, as the book was one which the law would not protect, he might steal the

belong to her, and a general cast of countenance of his own invention, he might be said to have produced a *jeu d'esprit;* a curiosity, perhaps, in its way, but by no means the lady in question." — Cowper's *Homer*, Preface, p. 24.

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property of the poet and his publisher with impunity. And this would, doubtless, be the case with respect to other things, however *good* they might be, if there was no law to restrain or punish the thief—for infidel honesty would not be tempted and overcome only by infidel books. We have very recently had three instances of the invasion of literary copyright, the impunity of the unprincipled pirate having been in each case the presumed immorality of the publication."* Owen, the "Communist," was mentioned in connection with the evident dissatisfaction with which he had on one occasion sat out a long and learned discussion relative to a polyglot Bible scheme, in a certain party. *Montgomery:* "It must have been a discordant topic to him; for he is like a street-organist, playing constantly one set of tunes, and these always on the same key. He called on me one Good Friday, about three years ago, when passing through Sheffield, and we spent half an hour in conversation. He, of course, was full of his 'community' scheme, which I said then, as I think now, could never answer. It may be very pleasant to dream of a system of society, in which the lowest are not to sink beneath, nor the highest to rise above, a certain level. But such an idea is as repugnant to human feeling, as it is opposed to the moral and intellectual development of the higher faculties of man. It is at once ingenious and shallow; a mere mechanical plan which puts people into motion like wheels, and at best runs out an existence as smooth and attenuated, if not as long, as the thread they are in the habit of

* He alluded to "Don Juan," "Cain," and Lawrence's "Lectures on Physiology," the original publishers of which moved the Court of Chancery for an injunction to restrain the infringement of copyright, and were refused on the ground mentioned in the text.

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spinning at Lanark; it finds them cotton men, women, and children at first, and it leaves them cotton men, women, and children at last." In the evening the party attended a missionary meeting in Carver Street Chapel, Mr. Newton, Montgomery, and Dr. Clarke occupying the same bench on the platform—an interesting trio, each man being distinguished in his own sphere, the first as an orator*, the second as a poet, and the third as a scholar. They addressed the meeting in turn, and with such effect that the collection afterwards made amounted to *226l.*

May 24. On the evening of this day, Montgomery attended a meeting of the committee of the Sheffield Sunday-School Union, and read a report, which he had prepared from documents furnished by upwards of forty different schools. These papers were, of course, written in as many different hands, and some of them so ill-expressed, that the corrections made by him were almost equal in amount to the original matter. The reading occupied an hour, at the conclusion of which he sat down quite exhausted. Something like this he encountered for many years as a perennial duty, than which nothing could be more onerous or unpoetical; and we mention the fact as an illustration of his patience and self-denial in the service of useful institutions. On Whit Monday, immediately ensuing, we walked with the poet, and several other gentlemen, at the head of a procession of seven thousand Sunday scholars. As we passed along the crowded streets, he remarked

* No one who ever heard this celebrated preacher, either in the pulpit or on the platform, will deny his title to the epithet in the text. His figure, his face, and his action were admirable accessories to his elocutionary powers. "Robert Newton," said Montgomery, "would be listened to with delight, even though he spoke in an unknown tongue."

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that this union of schools had not only been in various ways, directly and indirectly, beneficial to Sheffield, but it had formed the commencement of an entirely new era in his own feelings. At the public meeting in the afternoon, Mr. Everett said something about the insignificance of separate drops of water as compared with their combined aggregate in showers and streams. On this hint Montgomery took up his parable, adducing, and dwelling upon two striking instances of the importance attached even to *a drop* of water,—viz., in the Scripture account of the rich man and Lazarus; and the Oriental apologue which represents how a repining rain-drop, falling from the clouds into the mouth of a gaping oyster, became a pearl, which afterwards ornamented the diadem of one of the richest kings in the East. These illustrations, which rendered his spontaneous addresses often so striking and interesting, were always at his command, and generally shed a sweet and poetical charm over what he said, hallowed, as the whole invariably was, on occasions like the present, by deep devotional feeling.

A few glimpses of the poet will be caught in the following extracts from a letter written by Mr. Everett, his companion on a missionary excursion into Derbyshire: —

"April 24. We set out for Cromford, Wirksworth, &c., and now, behold us comfortably seated in the gig; and it was not until we had proceeded some distance that Montgomery all at once made the discovery that he had forgotten to satisfy himself as to my abilities as a driver! Nervous for a few minutes, he soon became reassured, the fresh, balmy air acting as a sedative. We were presently in Abbeydale, that charming scene in all seasons!—the monastic ruin and rising woods of Beauchief on our left — the young leaves on the latter just tinting and softening the dark masses.

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"'How beautiful the trees are!' he exclaimed. 'Some of them are already verdant with foliage, reminding us of a glorious resurrection, and appearing as though some unseen hand had touched and awakened them into life, while others are still slumbering in a state of winter darkness. It is not to be wondered at that almost every poet has paid a tribute to Spring. Mr. Southey, at the close of one of his letters to me, has a sentiment which all must have felt, but which I never found expressed by any writer but himself: "I believe," says he, "I am growing older, for I love spring more and autumn less." This is the case with myself. It is unnatural to look forward from the sunshine to the shade — from the freshness to the fall of the leaf. We dwell on the spring with rapture; because there is everything in it calculated to inspire and to animate us: as I get older I seem to live the season of youth over again.'* Then, adverting to the surrounding scenery, 'This is a lovely valley, and affords several exquisitely picturesque views.' I rejoined, 'Many of the old monks would have made admirable farmers: we seldom see an abbey placed on barren soil; the ground is not only generally very productive, but it is well wooded and watered.'

"The transition from monks and abbeys to religion itself was easy and natural; but it was to experimental religion. *Montgomery:* 'When I began to attend the Methodist chapel, about twenty years ago, the preachers were very strenuous in insisting on *instantaneous* justification and sanctification. The former I can easily comprehend, as a simple act of God; nor is there anything opposed to reason in it; and the person whose sins are blotted out, and in whose heart the love of God is shed abroad, must know it.' *Everett:* 'The work of instantaneous sanctification was insisted on by Mr. Wesley. I met with a letter in his own handwriting in the neighbourhood of Sheffield lately, in which he says, when speaking of the Christian's conflict,

* This sentiment is embodied in his verses entitled "A Walk in Spring," Works, p. 279.

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"It is a good fight. Unless you yield, you cannot but conquer. It is true, you will first conquer by little and little. But there is also an instantaneous conquest: in a moment sin shall be no more. You are gradually dying for a long time: but you will die in a moment." There is a peculiar aptitude in the comparison.' *Montgomery:* 'There is; it is an easy matter to take shelter behind a figure of speech. I have done that myself, when reasoning has failed me. No doubt remains with me of the *doctrine* of sanctification, and of the *necessity* of that divine work in the soul of man; but if a *degree* of sanctification is received in justification — if the work is *progressive* up to a period in which a person is said to believe for it — and if after it is then received, the work is still progressive, I can hardly comprehend either the nature, the reason, or the necessity of a single *intermediate* and *momentary* act, between its commencement in justification, and its termination in whatever measure of holiness we may have attained to when we quit this scene of mortality,—for, till we die, the same glorious and renovating work of grace must be going on in the soul.' *Everett:* 'Some preachers, perhaps, have erred in more strongly or frequently dwelling on the moment in which God is said to impart the *witness* of this work to the soul, than on the reality of the operation itself, though I conceive it as reasonable to expect that the Divine Being should give the *evidence* of this as that He should *testify* by his Spirit to the spirit of a believer an assurance of sonship or adoption. Every religious body has its own peculiarities of phraseology; and I should not willingly dispute with any man about the *manner*, provided the *fact* were admitted; but Scripture phraseology is the best on all such subjects.'

"He pointed out to me the 'Bolehill Trees' of his poem, which were conspicuous on a distant hill as we crossed the moors. This led us to poetry. 'Milman's "Fall of Jerusalem,"' said he, 'is one of the most classical and finished poems of the day; but it is as passionless as it is brilliant. Campbell's stanzas on the battle of Hohenlinden are worth

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the whole of Milman's poem, and I would rather be the author of that spirited lyric than of all that Milman ever wrote.' He then quoted with intense feeling the first four verses, —

"'On Linden, when the sun was low,' &c.

"'The work of carnage commences at midnight,' continued Montgomery; 'and as if a flash of lightning had just crossed the scene, you are permitted to get a glance at the dreadful field, when the whole is instantly closed again from the sight.' Omitting the intervening stanza, he proceeded: —

"'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun,' &c.

"Passing over the next, to the concluding verse, he repeated it, especially the first line, with an inflection of voice suited to the subject, and expressive of all its weight of meaning: —

"'Few, few, shall part where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.'

"'This little poem,' said he, 'was sent to me either by Campbell himself, or some friend to whom he had given a copy, for insertion in the 'Iris.' Though a mere sketch, it has all the effect of a finished picture; it sets the mind afloat, and furnishes matter for thinking: the imagination is more immediately carried away with it, than it would be by minute details, and this is the poetry which will ever be popular.' On observing that Campbell appeared to have been under the inspiration of genius when he wrote this poem, he said, 'In many of his smaller pieces he is unequalled.'

"After halting awhile at the commodious inn at Edensor, we drove through Chatsworth Park, and it was not to be

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wondered at that the sight of the 'Palace of the Peak,' of a mellow tone of colour, and bathed in the softest sunshine, should recal the story of the 'King of the Peak,'* which had just made thousands of readers acquainted with Haddon Hall, and its connection with the names of Vernon and Manners. *Everett:* 'Who is the author of the "King of the Peak?"' *Montgomery:* 'Allan Cunningham, an ingenious Scotchman, in the employment of Chantrey, the sculptor.' *Everett:* 'I was much pleased with the tale.' *Montgomery:* 'It is very clever; but too long.' *Everett:* 'I thought it too short: it seems to re-people the ancient mansion with its old inhabitants, in the state and manners of a feudal age.'

"Some attention to the ease of the animal we were driving, led Montgomery to cite and praise Bloomfield's lines on the 'poor Post-horse,' and to make a passing reflection on the ill-usage of most of the animals which have been compelled into the service of man.' *Everett:* 'Though the restoration of the brute creation is not a direct doctrine of revelation, yet there are passages from whence it may be almost inferred; and when I witness their sufferings, I must confess I am half a convert to the opinion that they will have a resurrection.' *Montgomery:* 'Their sufferings are not *mental* but *physical*, and are considerably less than we are at first induced to imagine. Those lambs, for instance, that are frisking by our side, are rearing for the knife of the butcher; they will suffer death, but death to them will be only a momentary pang. The animals that do suffer in an extraordinary way, like the post-horse, and some others, form a very inconsiderable portion of the general mass; and even among these, there are very few, if any, which have not a much greater quota of enjoyment than of suffering. Their principal enjoyment consists in eating, drinking, and

* This was also the title of a romance in three volumes by Mr. Bennet, of Chapel-en-le-Frith, published in 1823. The graphic sketch alluded to in the text was one of the "Twelve Tales of Lyddelcrosse," which appeared in the "London Magazine," 1822-3.

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sleeping; and when we take into our calculations the large share which they have of each of these, their sufferings are fairly met: the notion of injustice, therefore, is without foundation.' *Everett:* 'I am not disposed to settle the balance between their sufferings and enjoyments, because it is not the quantum of either the one or the other that affects the argument. I am at a loss to know why they should suffer *at all* — why they should share in the fall of man— how the sin of man could affect irrational creatures, incapable of moral evil! That God should curse the earth for man's offence is a mode of proceeding for which we can easily find a solution; because, while inanimate matter, however affected by the primal curse, was incapable of suffering, man was reaping the punishment due to his disobedience by the painful toil of ridding the ground of thorns, and cultivating its fruits; but in the brute creation, we have creatures not only rendered capable of, but actually enduring pain—no matter whether little or much—through the offence of another. The event proves, that there was an intimate but mysterious connection between the fall of man and the fate of irrational creatures, the one producing a change in the other: for this we can find no satisfactory reason, except that of the will of the Judge of all the earth, who will do right; and yet we frame reasons to show why the brute should not, in some way agreeable to his brute nature, reap some benefit from his restoration.'*

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* Mr. Everett here takes for granted what the Bible does not assert, and what geological evidence abundantly disproves,—viz. that living creatures only began to prey upon each other when —

> "—— Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world,"

had brought the penalty upon *his race*. Morally considered, the subject is a very perplexing one, and dissertations upon it are generally at least unsatisfactory. Dr. Chalmers, whose sermon on "Cruelty to Animals" is well known, once said, "I think that their being even slaughtered for food is one of the greatest

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"This conversation was interrupted by a smart shower of rain, which, however, presently passed away, and with it our discussion on the sufferings of the lower creation. Passing along Darley-Dale, he directed my attention to the magnificent yew-tree in the churchyard; and on our entering Matlock, to the grandeur, the repose, and the stratification of the High Tor; contrasting, as we drove along, the laborious excavations of the miner for lead, in the solid projecting rock, or in the foundation of these limestone hills, and the pleasant researches of the botanist on the varied surface of the ground—both pursuits being stimulated and rewarded here. On passing Cromford, the mills and the mansions of the Arkwrights, divided, with the river, the hills, and the picturesque hamlets, our attention and conversation, until we found ourselves at Wirksworth. The missionary meeting at which we spoke was, Montgomery said, one of the best he had ever attended for *variety;* nor was it *too long.* We returned to Cromford in time to hear a sermon from the Rev. John Hannah, for the same object. You will, I am sure, agree with me, that no one could ever sit by Montgomery in a place of worship, without being impressed with the devotional spirit which appeared to be present with him during singing and prayer, and with his serious and unremitting attention to the sermon, whoever was the preacher; and he was rarely critical in his remarks on ordinary occasions: with Mr. Hannah he was particularly pleased. In the evening he was silent, with a few exceptions: during supper, a person who had known the poet in former years, said — with more directness than delicacy—'Sir, you have acquired a great name since I left Sheffield.' I shall not soon forget the reply—'I *have* obtained a name, sir; but whether deservedly or not, others must judge: this I can only say, I tremble at the respon-

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enigmas of our present mysterious world." An interesting "Dissertation on the Opinions cited concerning the Mind of the Lower Animals" will be found among the Notes to Sheppard's "Autumn Dream."

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sibility under which I am thereby laid; while I am solicitous, not only to do nothing to tarnish my reputation, but, through the grace of God, to maintain it inviolate in well-doing.' We slept in the same room; and when, after we had respectively bowed our knees 'unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' in silent devotion, and wished each other 'good night' in bed, I could not but think of my companion, in connection with tender words addressed to the 'Pillow,' in one of his early poems: —

> " 'On thee, in pensive mood reclined,
> He poured his contemplative mind,
> Till o'er his eyes, with mild control,
> Sleep, like a soft enchantment, stole.'

"In the morning, the conversation turned upon the authorship of the Waverley novels, Montgomery attributing them to Sir Walter Scott*, in spite of the plausible objec-

* This he had done in the "Iris," in 1821. The avowal of Sir Walter's authorship has ended the interest of speculation; but the perennial reputation of his works leaves almost undiminished the value of the compliment to his genius by Montgomery in the following passage: — "If," says he, at the commencement of a *leading article*, "the 'mighty unknown,' as it is the fashion to call that invisible being, who works so many miracles in duodecimo that the staunchest novel-readers of the day can scarcely recover breath from wondering at one before their attention is absorbed by another, till the multitude of his productions are almost as surprising as their merit; if the author of 'Waverley,' and a whole clan from the north, who has at command, not only the riches of an inexhaustible imagination, and scatters abroad his wealth of thought with the prodigality of a Roman conqueror, lavishing gold among the populace in the hour of his triumph, but who has also such ready access to the hidden treasures of antiquarian lore, that he can body forth the characters and manners of any past period with a skill and fidelity which the pencil of no historian can rival, as if the age which he delineates had left only its monument of marble to the latter, but sat to *him* face to face, so happily does he exhibit 'its very form and pressure;' or, to change the picture, if he who appears to possess the hippogriff of

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tions of many persons, and, as he said, the decided incredulity of his friend Archdeacon Wrangham. . . . We hence drove to another missionary meeting at Crich. On ap-

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Astolpho, on which he can mount at his pleasure to the moon, run through all its changes in search of things lost or forgotten on earth, and return every month with a new cargo of such relics to enrich modern literature with the spoils of 'olden time;' in a word, if Sir Walter Scott — since it will not be doubted that *he* could perform these prodigies in prose as well as certain prodigies in verse, their forerunners (his acknowledged achievements); and since nobody knows anybody else who could do any such thing, till such an one shall be found, the worthy baronet of Parnassus must be content to bear the honour and burthen of as many volumes as are equal in value and fame, in the republic of letters, to so many provinces of the empire of Artaxerxes when Persia was in its glory; — if, after all these beginnings, this sentence should ever come to an end, though our pen, on so exhilarating a subject, seems as fluent as this inimitable writer's — if Sir Walter Scott, after having astonished the world a hundred times more than he has done already, should retire from it in the course of nature, and two centuries hence, quite contrary to that course, should reappear in his native land as a 'mighty unknown,' to delight posterity with the follies and fortunes of their forefathers, we verily think that he could not choose a theme for a romance more exquisitely suited to his versatility of talent than the history of the present administration — a theme which, however dry and unpromising at first sight, his plastic genius, unshackled at that distance of time by the *literalities* of truth, could fashion, and shape, and colour, in aërial retrospective, so as to invest the heterogeneous occurrences of the last ten years with an interest more amusing, if not more heroic, than he has given to the chivalrous scenes and banditti adventures in 'Ivanhoe,' or the proud sycophancy and old-fashioned gallantry in 'Kenilworth Castle.' The richest ores are dug out of the most barren mountains; both the poet and the novelist find their advantage in exploring obscure and neglected subjects in preference to such as are splendid and popular, for to the latter they can add nothing, being obliged to work in broad daylight, while out of the former, if the materials have intrinsic capabilities, they can create what they please." — *Iris*, Feb. 13. 1821.

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proaching Belper, it was inevitable to associate with the evidences of cultivation and general improvement about us the name and genius of Strutt. *Everett:* 'The town and neighbourhood of Belper are greatly indebted to the Strutts: they have converted the valley into a paradise of beauty and industry.' *Montgomery:* 'Paradise as it is, a serpent has found its way into it.' *Everett:* 'I believe several granaries and some outbuildings have been wilfully set on fire: if incendiarism be the serpent to which you allude, it is really a fiery one.' *Montgomery:* 'Considerable prejudice has been excited against them in consequence of their having become grocers, drapers, and butchers, compelling the hundreds of their workpeople to purchase food and clothing from them, to the injury of the regular dealers in those articles. It has, indeed, been said, that the profits of the industrious tradesmen thus diverted are given entire by the Messrs. Strutt to their workmen at the end of the year; but even if this be so, while it seems to obviate the charge of selfishness on the master's part, it must needs be exceedingly unsatisfactory on the part of the industrious shopkeeper, as well as the men themselves, who are thus called upon to surrender that spirit of independence which a right-minded Englishman ought to be so anxious to retain.' *Everett:* 'A practice which invades allodial feeling is certainly not to be justified; but, apart from that, the Messrs. Strutt have not only been instrumental in transforming the face of the neighbourhood, but in improving the morals and increasing the comforts of the people.' The meeting at Crich was thinly attended; but I never heard Montgomery speak with such fervour and effect as on that occasion. We left early; and, after a long but pleasant drive, reached Sheffield before midnight."

Thus far from Mr. Everett's letter.

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CHAP. LII.

1822.

PUBLICATION OF "POLYHYMNIA." — THE "DAISY IN INDIA." — MISSIONARY MEETING AT MANSFIELD. — CONVERSATION. — CAMPBELL, THE AFRICAN TRAVELLER. — MONTGOMERY HEARS ROBERT HALL PREACH. — VISIT TO ECCLESALL. — OLD TREES NEAR SHEFFIELD. — HYMNS. — MANOR SUNDAY SCHOOL. — DEATH OF LORD CASTLEREAGH. — HAZLITT'S REMARKS. — CUTLERS' FEAST. — TOAST AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT. — LETTER TO GEORGE BENNET. — TO JOHN RAY. — CASUAL INTERVIEW WITH CHANTREY. — THE "FALLING LEAF." — "THE ALPS, A REVERIE." — FOUNDATION OF ATTERCLIFFE CHURCH. — LETTER FROM MR. HOLLAND TO MR. EVERETT.

In April appeared "Polyhymnia; or Select Airs of celebrated Foreign Composers, adapted to English Words written expressly for the Work by James Montgomery: the Music arranged by C. E. Hasse," a teacher in Fulneck school. The seven songs here alluded to have been republished by the poet in his collected works; four of them were paraphrased from the German *, the

* The music to which the words "Heaven speed the righteous sword," &c., are adapted, was by Hümmel: the "London Magazine" (May 1822) quoted them with the following observation: — "The original strain, of which these stanzas are an imitation, was wont to be sung, with patriotic enthusiasm, by the German and Prussian soldiers, in their encampments, on their marches, and in the field of battle, during the last campaigns of the allies against Bonaparte. This Tyrtæan lyric, therefore, contributed, in its day and its degree, to the deliverance of Europe." Montgomery, on giving the verses in the "Iris," said: — "Those who are aware

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other three were original. Pleasing as they are with the accompaniments, they have perhaps been less admired than any equal number of compositions from the same pen. These pieces cost Montgomery a good deal of labour; but it was the labour of love; for he not only considered the music itself in this case excellent, but his ear and his heart were alike always gratified by superior singing. Madame Catalani had just been at Sheffield, and he had been delighted by "her indescribable originality of talent, in tone, compass, style, and execution;" by her "ability to do whatever she pleased, without fear and without effort, till to his fantastic imagination her voice seemed *an instrument* playing upon itself."

To this year also belongs the composition of the much-admired stanzas to the "Daisy in India," the history of which was the following: — Mr. Cooper, the curator of the botanical garden and conservatories at Wentworth House, who had been one of the original adventurers in the unfortunate missionary ship "Duff," had sent a package of sundry kinds of British seeds to the learned and venerable Doctor William Carey, one of the first Baptist missionaries to India, where they had established themselves in the small Danish settlement of Serampore, in the province of Bengal. Some of the seeds had been enclosed in a bag containing a portion of

how much the moral feelings as well as the passions of men (especially *men in multitudes*, held together by strong sympathies and great interests) are influenced by popular music and national poetry, will be disposed to allow the original song and its sublime air no mean portion of the honour of overthrowing Bonaparte, and, though itself a war-song, delivering Europe from the *curse of war*, otherwise interminable than by the destruction of that military despotism in France, which could only exist by the enslavement of Christendom, or the perpetual disturbance of the peace of nations."

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their native earth. In March 1821 a letter was received by Cooper from his friend the Doctor, who was himself well skilled in botany, and had a garden rich in plants both tropical and European. In this letter, which was shown to Montgomery by his friend Mr. Bennet, the writer said: —

"That I might be sure not to lose any part of your valuable present, I shook the bag over a patch of earth in a shady place: on visiting which, a few days afterwards, I found springing up, to my inexpressible delight, a *bellis perennis* of our English pastures. I know not that I ever enjoyed, since leaving Europe, a simple pleasure so exquisite as the sight of this *English* daisy afforded me; not having seen one for upwards of thirty years, and never expecting to see one again." *

On the perusal of this passage by Montgomery the stanzas seemed, as he said, to spring up almost spontaneously in his mind, as the "little English flower" did in the garden of the worthy missionary, whom the poet imagined to be addressing it in his words. With great care and attention Dr. Carey was able to perpetuate the "Daisy in India," but as an *annual* only, raised by seed from season to season; and often recognised with delight by sojourners from Europe.†

* In writing to his friends in England, Dr. Carey more than once used such language as the following: — "The cowslips and daisies of your fields would be great acquisitions here." — *Life of Carey*, p. 443.

† Montgomery was interested to learn that his were not the only verses suggested by the unexpected appearance of the "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower" under a tropical sun: a letter from Captain Vetch, of the Royal Bengal Infantry, contained an "Address to the Daisy Flower in India," in the manner and dialect of that by Burns — Scotland, of course, and *its* daisies, being feelingly recalled to the memory of the Caledonian exile

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June 4. Mr. Everett accompanied Montgomery on a missionary excursion to Mansfield. The Hope coach left Sheffield at half-past seven in the morning — an early hour for the poet. He was however ready to the minute; and watching the guard place a large watch in its receptacle, "There," said he, "is *his* time, locked up like a turnspit dog in a wheel, to run its rounds and do its work." Both parties admired the vicinal beauty of Sheffield towards the south: Banner-Cross, an elegant Gothic pile, with its sylvan adjuncts — the woods about Beauchief Abbey — the trees about Norton-Woodseats — and the distant moors, now becoming more purple to the eye, — successively attracted attention. Mr. Rhodes, who afterwards published an elegant work entitled "Peak Scenery," was mentioned. *Montgomery:* "My friend Rhodes has just returned from Derbyshire, where he has been exploring the beauties of the more picturesque districts of the county: he has a fine eye for catching, and great skill in describing, the leading features of a landscape; but I doubt whether, after all his pains, the work which he has in hand will meet with a reception equal to its merits. Descriptive writing, when pursued to much length, is almost sure to become monotonous, unless the objects be very novel and striking indeed: for, say what you will, clouds are clouds, water is water, hills are hills, and rocks are rocks; and simple ideas of these objects in their simplest forms are generally prominent in the mind, even while reading elaborate descriptions of special scenes: nor is the attainment of comparative excellence in this kind of writing either difficult, or uncommon." Something like dissent from the last sen-

and his wife, "a dear, sweet Scotch lassie," on the banks of the Ganges.

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timent being expressed, the poet added: —"I do not so much refer to what may be the highest style of the art itself, as to the works of descriptive writers in general. Of poetical artists in this line, Scott satisfies and charms me most: his descriptions, whether of persons, actions, or scenery, appear like *fac-similes* of the reality to my mind." When the coach, after leaving Chesterfield, reached the rise on the road from which Bolsover Castle and Hardwick Hall became visible, Hault Hucknall church, in the direction of the latter, attracted Montgomery's attention. *Everett:* "I visited that church several years ago, for the purpose of copying the inscription on the gravestone of Hobbes, the author of the 'Leviathan,' who is buried there. It grew dusk, and I had to send for a candle to enable me to see to decipher it: as soon as I was shut up alone in the church, such a sensation of horror crept over me as it would be difficult to describe; I almost expected the infidel philosopher to manifest his ghostly presence by some appalling sound or movement!" *Montgomery:* "Hobbes has now proved the truth or the falsehood of his insidious doctrines; but he aspired to the character of a poet, as well as that of a metaphysician: I purchased his translation of Homer a few years ago at an old bookstall; his lines are perhaps the most rugged that can be found in print."

By some chance, the conversation turned upon the old divines and dramatists who are characterised by coarseness as well as wit; and upon the taste of kings and courtiers who could listen to South in the pulpit, and to Sedley on the stage. *Montgomery:* "Playwrights as well as preachers are sometimes more obviously moulded by, than directly responsible for, the spirit of the age — which, however, it ought to be the duty of both rather to reprove than reflect, when it is vicious.

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Shakspeare finds an apology, where and when he most needs it, in the manners of his day. He can hardly be compared with South; however, they may be contrasted. Shakspeare is never vulgar; and when he offends against delicacy — which is not seldom — he does not seem to go out of his way for an occasion of doing so; whereas every vulgarism of South's appears to be the result of a set purpose. Shakspeare wrote gaily, naturally, and freely as the birds sing; South artificially, as if evincing a viciously acquired taste: Shakspeare's pruriences spring up spontaneously like rank weeds in a rich soil; South's buffooneries appear like ill plants carefully cultivated. The poet, however, is more read than the divine: how much, therefore, one laments to encounter expressions offensive to modesty, after reading such noble passages as that on Redemption! —

"'Why, all the souls that were, were forfeit once;
And He that might the vantage best have took,
Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If He, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? O, think on that,
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new-made.'"

When rising on the platform to speak at Mansfield, Montgomery recollected it was the 4th of June — the late king's birthday; this was sufficiently suggestive, and he addressed the meeting at length on the civil and religious privileges, especially that full toleration of different opinions and modes of worship which had been enjoyed by the country during the long reign of George the Third.

On returning, their only companion in the coach was a gentleman with whose countenance and conversation they were much struck; and who, on Mr. Everett mentioning and saying how highly he prized a fragment of

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the rock of Horeb, gave him a piece of *blue* asbestos, as a rare mineral, brought by himself from the Griqua country, in South Africa. *Everett:* "Have we, then, beside us, Mr. Campbell, the African traveller?" *Stranger:* "Yes." *Everett:* "And this is Mr. Montgomery, of Sheffield." A gratifying mutual recognition ensued, Campbell stating that he was on his way to a missionary meeting at Huddersfield. *Montgomery:* "You will be the bearer of the glad tidings of the safe arrival of my friend Mr. Bennet and his colleague at Otaheite." *Campbell:* "And also of the sad tidings of the death of King Pomare *, which only arrived a few hours before I left London." *Montgomery:* "I am told the missionaries on board the 'Tuscan' made one of the quickest voyages to the South Seas ever known." *Campbell:* "Four months and nine days; and a vessel has, in one instance, gone in even less time than that. I should not be surprised if, before long, we find a voyage, which once occupied ten or twelve months, accomplished in four or less: and who knows but that, owing to future improvements in navigation, we may hear of mothers taking a trip to the East Indies to see their sons and daughters!"† After a conversation about the curious animal‡, the head of which Campbell had brought from Africa, and which had been supposed by some persons to be the unicorn, mentioned in the book of

* Who had embraced Christianity through the preaching of the missionaries.

† The remarks in the text were made and recorded before ocean steamers and overland journeys were dreamt about. A person now goes from London to Calcutta in seven weeks, and from Liverpool to New York in about as many days; while a voyage to the South Seas is proportionately accelerated.

‡ *Rhinoceros unicornis* figured in "Travels in South Africa," vol. i. p. 294.

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Job, Montgomery commended the tact of Sir Everard Home, who, when he had seen the head, and heard the account of the beast, went and purchased a Scripture Concordance, in order to look out and compare the character of the places where the unicorn is said to be found, with the habitat of the monoceros described by the traveller. *Montgomery:* "We have obtained more clear and important information relative to the state of society in several foreign countries, especially of savage life, and, in some instances, of natural history too, by means of religious missionaries, than from the works of many persons calling themselves historians, travellers, and philosophers: and the literary man, who is not in the habit of reading 'Missionary Notices,' will be very likely to be behind many of the 'unlearned' in curious as well as in useful knowledge." *Campbell:* "Our public religious meetings, besides the opportunities they afford for communicating interesting information, have also a tendency to unite mankind in the best of bonds. I told Robert Owen that I considered the Bible Society the best *Peace Society* in the world: this *he* acknowledged." *Montgomery:* "I have myself known several individuals 'bound over to keep the peace,' by uniting to aid its operations—a bond which they could only forfeit by abandoning the principles of the Institution." *Campbell:* "Mr. Stephens and Mr. Raynor *, both members of my congregation, were present when Mr. Owen made the concession; and the best of it is, he promised to give the former five hundred pounds towards his benevolent operations in Ireland." *Montgomery:* "What he promised he will do; and the money will do a vast deal more good than

* The former, a zealous advocate for the education of the poor; the latter, an active supporter of the Religious Tract Society.

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if spent on his own fanciful system. Robert Stephens is doing more for Ireland than the Duke of Wellington, Lord Londonderry, and a host of native noblemen either have done or are likely to do. He was right when he said, 'Give me an army of schoolmasters, and I will engage to conquer Ireland.'"* On the coach stopping at a public-house, in front of which a pump was yielding its wonted supply of drink for the horses, "That," said Montgomery, "would be a joyful sight in some parts of Africa." *Campbell:* "Indeed it would; and perhaps only those persons who may have actually experienced the want of water in a desert are entirely free from wonder that tribes or nations should ever go to war with each other on account of a well." Cattle were passing to or from Chesterfield fair; on seeing them Campbell said: "Mr. Montgomery, I dare say you never had occasion to be thankful for the advantage of having your food travelling by your side." After a pause, *Montgomery:* "I have often felt thankful for having it placed before me." *Campbell:* "I refer to the living supplies of provision which travellers are obliged to take with them when they proceed on a long journey into the interior of Africa. Thankful have I been many a time when, after trying in vain to shoot any kind of game, to see about my waggons a flock of sheep,—and even the yoke-oxen themselves suggested the idea of special gratitude in a possible emergency." *Montgomery:* "Both a wise and a kind Providence seem to be strikingly displayed in furnishing so large a proportion of that which is used for the sustenance of man with the life by which a supply is not only perpetuated, but economised."

* How often has this sentiment been reiterated! and alas! how little comparatively has been done in proof of its correctness!

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On the 17th of June, the congregation at Fulneck, in common with their brethren in every other settlement, commemorated the centenary of "the beginning of the building of Herrnhut by the first emigrants out of Moravia." Montgomery wrote some verses* to be sung on the occasion, "and they tended greatly to enliven the meeting; indeed," adds Mr. Ramftler, "I do not remember that ever I knew such a heavenly and harmonious spirit of singing in our chapel as on this day." The poet was repeatedly called upon in after years to embody, in suitable terms, the sentiments and feelings of his brethren on the jubilee or centenary recurrence of "Memorial Days."

June 19. We had the gratification of hearing the Rev. Robert Hall preach in the Baptist chapel, Sheffield. Montgomery was also present; and it may be mentioned, as an illustration of his self-denial, that he declined an invitation to breakfast with Mr. Hall at Wincobank on the following morning, in order to be present at a meeting of the Lancasterian school, in which he took an active part.

On leaving the meeting, Mr. Hall and his sermon became the subjects of conversation. *Montgomery:* "You said, I think, last night, you never heard him before? Though you might be disappointed with his manner, he would at least equal your expectations as to his intellect. His voice was exceedingly feeble at first, and his short dry cough renders hearing somewhat painful to persons who are unacquainted with him. Some ladies who sat with me seemed to express the general feeling when they said they thought he was labouring under the effects of a severe cold, and were astonished his friends should permit him to preach in

* Original Hymns, CCLXXI.

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such a state." *Everett:* "I heard him distinctly through the whole of the discourse." *Montgomery:* "Did it not appear to you that he lost himself for a minute or two towards the commencement of the sermon?" *Everett:* "That must have been apparent to most of the audience. From the close connection there was between the second and third heads of discourse, he unintentionally ran the one into the other; and when he considered himself as having arrived at the latter, he proceeded to announce 'Thirdly,' but, finding he had been there already, he stepped on to the fourth without further ceremony." *Montgomery:* "The plan of the discourse had, no doubt, been accurately laid down previous to his going into the pulpit; and though many of the expressions were happily chosen for the occasion, yet there were others too happy to be deemed spontaneous. There were instances in which the preacher fairly broke down with the weight of thought for want of words; and, when the right form of expression did occur, he seemed to rebound again, and carry us higher than before. This occurred in the case—though, perhaps, it was not equally striking with some others—when he was speaking of the *rarity* of vicarious sacrifice.* He wished to impress his auditory with the importance of Christ's death as an event standing alone in the annals of the world, without a parallel, agreeable to that passage of Scripture, 'For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Then it was that he burst forth, first employing the

* The text was, "For the transgression of my people was he stricken."—Isaiah, liii. 8.

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word *monument*, and then *column;* next trying the weaker word *plain*, till at length he rushed upon *champaign*, when away he went, and bore us away with him, contemplating the sacrificial death of the Saviour as 'a single monument, a column standing in the champaign and wilderness of the universe, inscribed with characters found on none other!' The thought, however, was, probably, not his own, though, perhaps, there were few persons present, besides myself, who would suspect from whence he might have borrowed it. The notorious Peter Pindar says:—

"'Thus while I, wond'ring, pause o'er Shakspeare's page,
I mark, in visions of delight, the sage,
High o'er the wrecks of man, who stands sublime;
A column in the melancholy waste
(Its cities humbled, and its glories past),
Majestic, 'mid the solitude of time.'"

Everett: "Mr. Foster employs the same image in his Essays, only varied for his purpose when adverting to those writers who treat the subject of immortality, without its connecting doctrines, as others would descant on some stupendous natural phenomenon, or a brilliant achievement. In this view, he observes, 'It appears somewhat like a majestic tower, which a traveller in some country may find standing in a solitary scene, no longer surrounded by that great assemblage of buildings, that ample city, of which it was raised to be the centre, the strength, and the ornament.'" *Montgomery:* "Neither *tower* nor *monument* is equal to *column;* Mr. Hall saw that, and therefore adopted it after he had tried the other; it is simple and perfect, and fixes the mind exclusively on itself, without the distraction of turrets, loopholes, ornaments, or angles. The person that once reads it in Pindar can never forget it:

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the mind seems to conceive but one object — *A lonely column in the waste of time!* . . . . Mr. Hall opened out in grand style in his introduction. He did not, in stating the objections to vicarious sacrifice, merely form a man of straw for the personal gratification of destroying it; but he placed the phalanx of anti-christian reasonings in battle array before him, and met and fought them like a man armed with both learning and argument. We had, in different parts of the discourse, all the sobriety of solid thought blended with all the glory of exalted imagination. When he came to treat on the *equivalent*, he was very powerful. He showed that a man might take his money out of his pocket to ransom his friend — might incur great personal danger; but when it came to the certain and actual substitution of life for life, he would be found to shrink. Nor was it the bare sacrifice of *one* that could redeem *millions* the same in kind; it was the Divinity of Christ that stamped the sacrifice of his humanity with infinite importance. These were admirably connected by Mr. Hall, and they must be really connected by us. For my part, I cannot conceive in what any alleged efficacy of the atoning sacrifice of Christ could consist, abstracted from his Godhead; and the opposers of the one, very consistently — because necessity is laid upon them — relinquish the other. The doctrines stand or fall with each other; and before Socinians can hope to get rid of the Divinity of Christ, they must burn the Bible, — and even then would that doctrine be seen rising out of the ashes of the imperishable word of truth."

Mr. Holland said it was to be regretted that Mr. Hall could not be prevailed upon to prepare a volume of his sermons for the press, as the few which had been printed were so very excellent. Montgomery replied, "They are so; and that is perhaps one reason why he hesitates to

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publish more: he has a vast reputation at stake; and his writings will fetch any price: he might have a thousand pounds any day for a volume of sermons." We then talked of his personal peculiarities; and of the universal respect which was paid to him, both as a man and as a preacher. Montgomery said, humility was the most remarkable trait in his character; adding, "I have heard my friend, Dr. Gregory*, say that Mr. Hall's great abilities had exposed him to more temptations from flattery, and other perils in that direction, than probably any other individual in the kingdom." We have before us a note in the handwriting of Hannah More, in which that excellent woman says, "I have seen several who heard Robert Hall; it is one of the few privileges I have envied: he has no superior in or out of the Church."

In the afternoon of the following day, Montgomery met several ministers and other gentlemen at a tea given to the children of the school above mentioned, at the Bowling-Green House, on Cherry-Tree Hill, about two miles south of Sheffield. The evening was fine; and Montgomery, who wished to extend his walk, left the party early, accompanied by Mr. Everett. He would first call upon a Mr. and Mrs. Ibbotson, in whose house at Sharrow he had occupied lodgings during the two preceding summers, greatly to the advantage of his health. The good people of the house respectively welcomed their late inmate, especially a venerable woman about ninety years of age, who at once accosted him with—"Aye, Mr. *Gomery*, I am glad to see you; and how are you, sir?" Having once lent the old lady Cennick's Sermons to read, she wished to

* Whose able delineation of the character of Robert Hall is well known.

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borrow them again: he, of course, readily acceded, promising to look out the volumes for her as soon as he got home. On leaving the house, it was remarked to him, that persons had often taken a liberty with his name in his absence, calling him Mr. *Mont*, but that was the first time *Gomery* * alone had been heard; he replied, "They have clipped me at both ends." He seemed to take pleasure in pointing out the room in which he sat in the evenings, the chamber in which he slept, and in describing the prospect from the windows of both; adding, with an air of animated playfulness, when directing attention to the farm-yard, "*We* had our farm and our cattle too."

There was scarcely a foot of ground hereabout, or a tree, or a turn in the road affording a prospect, with which he was not acquainted. At a place called the Edge, about a quarter of a mile from Cherry-Tree Hill, stand two remarkably picturesque old trees: "Come," said the poet to his companion, "as you are partial to the oak, I will show you two venerable remnants of that race of forest Anaks which once occupied these parts." Every reader of Montgomery's works must have noticed his own fond and frequent allusions to the oak, both in prose and verse; and only that very week he had transferred to the "Iris" Washington Irving's animated

* There does indeed exist an authority for this form of abbreviating the name, of which, to be sure, the good woman knew nothing. In an early printed volume, entitled "Latine Songs, with their English Poems," by Henry Bold, is a Latin translation of the ballad of "Chevy Chase," in which the stanza describing the death of Sir Hugh Montgomery is thus rendered: —

"Hugonem Gomerj, versus,
Sic telum statuit,
Vel anserimus calamus,
In corde maduit."

Vide Dibdin's *Reminiscences*, vol. ii. p. 933.

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"descant on park and forest scenery—the shape and beauty of old trees."*

ANCIENT TREES, BRINCLIFFE EDGE, SHEFFIELD.

After examining, measuring, and speculating upon the probable antiquity of the Brincliffe oaks†, the two

* His interest in this subject will be farther illustrated by an ingenious apologue, which we print at the end of this volume (Appendix C.). In this we have not merely a "Talking Oak," like Tennyson's, but a "Praying Oak:" and why not? for surely trees, as well as

"—— birds, were always able
To hold discourse, — at least in fable."

† These oaks, locally interesting and picturesque as they are, or were when the sketch was made, have no claim to rank, either in bulk or celebrity, with those at Cowthorpe and Welbeck; but they have always been regarded with pleasure by us as objects of the poet's admiration. We fear, however, their days are num-

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friends climbed to the brow of the adjoining hill, to gaze on the magnificent landscape-panorama which lay outspread before them, suffused as it was with the mellow lustre of the setting sun: after "various discourse" on the scenery and its associations, they retraced their steps homeward, "the cool of the evening" recalling more than one Scripture passage of accordant beauty and interest at the moment.

July 10. Mr. Holland called upon Montgomery in the Hartshead. *Holland:* "Have the 'Songs of Zion' had a satisfactory sale?" *Montgomery:* "No; nor did I anticipate they would: they will only be understood and approved by religious people; and even with these they must make their way slowly. It is far from popular to become the champion of the Cross, even in this way; but it must be an honour to any poet to furnish words in which sincere Christians may appropriately express their joys and their sorrows, their hopes and their fears: and to do this has been my design in these imitations of the Psalms, as well as in my original hymns. Of course, they will not supersede other collections *en masse;* but they will be severally adopted, according to individual taste, in compilations of different kinds, either for public or private devotion, and will thus become useful. The most attractive hymn I ever wrote is that on "Prayer," which first appeared in Mr. Bickersteth's selection. Being simple in its form, general in its application, and easy to be remembered, though rather instructive than devotional in its character, it has been adopted by Churchmen, Dissenters, Metho-

bered; the ground on which they stand has been sold to a cheap building company, who have already reduced them to the desolate aspect of "naked trunks amidst a fresh-dug plot;" preliminary, doubtless, to their removal from the scene which they have occupied and adorned for five hundred years.

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dists, Quakers, and others, sometimes without even the initials of the author's name; and in one case, I am told that a compiler has so mixed it with other matter as to make it appear to be his own." *Holland:* "I shall not be surprised to find these 'Songs of Zion' made the foundation of some ill-natured criticism." *Montgomery:* "Blackwood connects my name with a passing sarcasm on 'Methodistic Hymns.'"*

July 14. Montgomery attended a meeting of teachers at Red Hill Sunday School, sacrificing to that duty the privilege of hearing Mr. Bickersteth preach a missionary sermon. One striking passage in his address we may notice here, — the little Wesleyan school at the "Manor" was officially mentioned. "When only a few weeks since," said he, "I was taking a walk over the Park Hill, I came to the Manor, and there pausing, as I have often done, to contemplate the ruins of that ancient summer-residence of the Talbots, and the tiny school within their embrace, I heard a sound in the latter; and listening for a moment, I found it was the voice of a good man giving a word of religious exhortation to his neighbours: what *they* might feel, I know not; but the word entered *my* soul; and it was a word which — had I never heard the Gospel preached before or after — would have left me inexcusable at the bar of God, if I had despised or neglected the message thus casually conveyed to my ear and to my heart."†

On the day following he moved the first resolution at a meeting of the Sheffield branch of the Church

* Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, June, 1822, preface, p. 8.

† Perhaps one of the rudest temples ever consecrated by religious worship, even according to Methodistical usage, was a large dilapidated barn at the Manor, in which Mr. Everett once preached to an overflowing congregation, Montgomery himself being a hearer on that occasion.

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Missionary Society, where he was gratified and animated by the presence of his esteemed friend, Rowland Hodgson, who had been recently raised up most unexpectedly from a bed of sickness, to take the chair on this occasion. Three days afterwards he attended a Bible meeting at Hathersage, in the Peak, as was his practice for several years; the house of Mr. Cocker, a worthy Methodist, always being liberally open to visitors on these occasions.*

August 20. In the "Iris" of this date Montgomery had a leading article on a subject which was, at the moment, the theme of every newspaper editor in the United Kingdom—we allude to the death of Lord Castlereagh at the time of the visit of George the Fourth to Scotland.

"The splendour of majesty leaving the British metropolis, careering along the ocean, and landing in the capital of the north, is distinguished only by glimpses through the dense array of clouds in which Death hid himself, while he struck down to the dust the stateliest courtier near the throne, and the broken train of which pursues and crosses the royal progress wherever its glories are presented to the eye of imagination. . . . . .

"The same indefatigable mind—a mind of all-work—which thus ruled the continent with a rod of iron—the sword, within the walls of the House of Commons ruled a more distracted region with a more subtle and finely-tempered weapon—the tongue; and truly, if this *was* the only weapon his lordship wielded there, where he had daily to encounter, and frequently almost alone, enemies more formidable than Buonaparte, it must be acknowledged that he achieved greater victories than Demosthenes or Cicero ever gained in far more easy fields of strife; nay, he wrought miracles of speech, outvying those miracles of

* He established an extensive needle manufactory at Hathersage.

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song which Orpheus is said to have performed, when not only men and brutes, but rocks, woods, and mountains followed the sound of his voice and lyre.

"But there was a worm at the root of the gourd that flourished over his head in the brightest sunshine of a court; both perished in a night, and in the morning that which had been his glory and his shadow covered him like a shroud; while the corpse, notwithstanding all his honours, and titles, and offices, lay unmoved in the place where it fell, till a judgment had been passed upon him which the poorest peasant escapes when he dies in the ordinary course of nature."

The three foregoing paragraphs have been quoted and animadverted upon by the late Mr. Hazlitt, in an ingenious essay "On the Prose Style of Poets."* The critic contrasts this passage with one from Burke's celebrated "Letter to a Noble Lord." "This," says he, "is very unlike Burke: yet Mr. Montgomery is a very pleasing poet, and a strenuous politician. The whole is *travelling out of the record*, and to no sort of purpose." We are not sure that the unfairness of thus bringing together a casual passage from Montgomery's newspaper lucubrations, and one from the famous publication of the author of the "Sublime and Beautiful" alluded to, is compensated by the compliment implied in making the comparison: without, therefore, affecting to challenge for the poet a parity of eloquence with the orator on political topics in general, it is obvious that, in the case before us, the tone of virulent invective in which the Duke of Bedford is compared to "the Leviathan, tumbling about his unwieldly bulk in the ocean of royal bounty," would have been singularly out of place in a meditation on the death of a minister of the crown

* Plain Speaker, vol. i. p. 22.

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who had just fallen by his own hand. Unlike the style of Burke as the foregoing passage may be deemed, is it unworthy the genius and the Christianity of Montgomery? We think not.

Sept. 5th. Mr. Thomas Champion, scissor manufacturer, having been elected "Master" of the "Cutlers' Company," this year, Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Holland dined by invitation with him, his colleagues, and other guests, at their old hall, in Church Street. During the infancy of the celebrated staple manufactures of Sheffield, and while "the park" adjacent to the ancient castle of the Lovetots, the Furnivals, and the Talbots was no less famous as a preserve of deer than for its "glorious issue of oaks,"* the "Corporation of Cutlers within Hallamshire" used annually to assemble on the first Thursday in September, and dine together on a fat buck given by the lord of the manor. In after years, when successful industry had comparatively enriched the town, and when castle, deer, and feudal chief had alike disappeared from its precincts, the "Cutlers' Feast" was still kept up with more ceremony and at greater cost. Some of the neighbouring nobility and gentry were usually invited, and the festival was regarded as a sort of local holiday. During the latter years of this period Montgomery, from his public position, was, as a matter of course, expected to be one of the guests. After, however, the special immunities of this ancient corporation were, to a great extent, abrogated by an act of parliament which "opened the trade" to any and every person who chose to embark in or work at it, the once celebrated "Cutlers' Feast" dwindled into a mere dinner for the members of the company, or little more. The spirited and respectable

* Evelyn's "Sylva," by Hunter, vol. ii. p. 200.

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individual above named, and upon whom had thus devolved the highest civic honour then known in Sheffield, attempted — and not unsuccessfully — to revive the ancient character of the feast; and to accomplish this, he omitted nothing which could conduce to the hospitable — or rather to the splendid — entertainment of his official brethren and personal friends.

Among Mr. Champion's guests on this occasion, were Sir William Bagshawe, Bart.; J. A. S. Wortley, Esq., M.P. (afterwards Lord Wharncliffe); Revs. Thomas Sutton, the vicar of Sheffield; Thomas Cotterill; and Joseph Hunter, author of the "History of Hallamshire;" Mr. Ebenezer Rhodes, author of "Peak Scenery," &c. In the course of the evening, it was concerted to propose the health of Montgomery, and the toast was confided to William Younge, M.D.*, who submitted it in a brief strain of vivid eloquence, highly complimentary to the talents and character of the Sheffield bard. The speaker compared his gifted townsman not, he said, to some mere luminous meteor which, kindled of noxious matter, flies along the heavens, brilliant, and it may be astonishing — then passing suddenly away; but to one of the more conspicuous of the fixed stars, whose steady and beautiful light attracts attention, and excites admiration, not more by its splendour than by its permanency. This elegant and appropriate compliment, which was received by the company as a just tribute to the genius and worth of Montgomery, in one respect fell short of its object — an intention to have gratified the meeting with the

* Dr. Younge, a physician of the old school, was a member of an old Sheffield family; he had been an early friend of Sir J. E. Smith, the founder of the Linnæan Society, of which the Doctor was an original member. He died in 1838.

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acknowledgment of the poet, which would, no doubt, have followed, had he not previously withdrawn from the room unperceived by the speaker, but, perhaps, not quite unapprehensive of his design.

Mr. Champion wishing to preserve some memorial of the proceedings of the day, beyond a paragraph in the newspapers, obtained from Dr. Younge a copy of his speech; and as Montgomery was employed to print the article, the minute was put into his hand, with a request that he would insert it in the list of toasts and speeches. This, however, he respectfully but peremptorily refused to do; alleging that "there were no types in his office that would print it!" Arguments were unavailing to overcome the modesty of the printer, who by this act deprived the record of one of its principal features of interest; and when Mr. Champion, who had neglected to transcribe Dr. Younge's note, asked Montgomery to return it, the latter replied, with the greatest *sang froid*, that he had burnt it! Little incidents like this sometimes afford more characteristic glimpses of what a man *really is*, than can be obtained from his public conduct.

Mr. Holland having applied to Montgomery, at the request of parties at a distance, to favour them with an original hymn, he said he was afraid he should not be able to comply; for he wanted a little relaxation from work, and meant to run away as soon as he could: meanwhile, however, three hymns he *must* write, to be sung on laying the foundation stones of new churches at Sheffield and Attercliffe.

James Montgomery to John Holland.

"'Iris' Office, Sept. 17. 1822.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"Nearly at the last hour before setting out on an excursion that may detain me from home some weeks, I

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recollect and obey your last request, concerning a hymn for the Gainsborough school. The enclosed is the only thing I can find by me that will at all suit the occasion. ['Happy the child, who makes,' &c., Orig. Hymns, CCCXIV.] It has never been used in Sheffield, nor anywhere else, but by a country Sunday-school. I have really not had time *and* spirit,—for both are necessary, and must be contemporary,—to write what was never written before, and what might never have been written again had it been done now. Therefore, your friends must be content with this, or frankly reject it.

"I am truly your friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"Mr. J. Holland."

The following letter is dated three days earlier:—

James Montgomery to George Bennet.

"Sheffield, Sept. 14. 1822.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have only just time to shake hands with you across the globe. The intelligence of a ship sailing for the South Seas has come upon me so suddenly, that I can only huddle into a parcel what has lain by me some time, or what I may receive from Wincobank to-day. We have been rejoiced to hear of your happy and providential arrival at your desired haven; but my pleasure was dashed with disappointment at not receiving the intelligence under your own hand. There was a letter for this friend and another for that, but post after post came and went, and there was no letter for me; at length I heard distinctly from Mr. M'Coy, that though you had mentioned to him having written to me, there was no packet of the kind found among your despatches. I believe I have sent three courses of letters and pamphlets since you sailed, and I hope you have long, ere now, received some or the whole of them. I have just now received a letter from your brother, Colonel Bennet. He has been residing at Scarborough, and is immediately returning to York, after having derived so much

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benefit from sea-bathing that he talks of throwing away his stick. . . . I must conclude in haste,

"Your affectionate and faithful friend,

"J. MONTGOMERY.

"P.S.—Mr. Hodgson and I talk of going to Matlock on Tuesday. This is a trifle; but by the time it reaches the South Sea, it will be of interest to you, at least.

"George Bennet, Esq., Otaheite."

Sept. 18. Montgomery left Sheffield for Matlock, accompanied by Mr. Hodgson. The objects of his visit were relaxation and health; and his avowed intention was to write nothing besides his weekly lucubrations for the "Iris," and these his foreman had often difficulty enough to get from him in time. The following extracts from a letter addressed to Mr. Ray, who had charge of the printing-office, exhibit the writer in an amiable light as a master.

James Montgomery to John Ray.

"Matlock, Friday evening, Sept. 27. 1822.

[After giving very explicit instructions relative to the insertion of letters connected with a controversy then raging in the newspapers, Montgomery adds]—"I thank you for the particular information respecting the office business, which is very satisfactory to me: so far as you have proceeded you have done well; and I sincerely thank all the persons in the office for their diligence and attention, which I consider not as mere service but as kindness on their part, because I am never less anxious concerning my interest in their hands than when I am from home. I rejoice to learn that —— has obtained employment with —— and Co. It will be a place of hard work, I dare say, but if he can stand it, I am pretty sure it will be worth his while. [This was a brother of one of his workmen.]

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"So poor Mr. Daniels'* remains are now at rest in the grave. His death was a shock so sudden as to take away sensation from my mind, and I felt the whole night after it nothing but a restless and almost listless excitement not to be described: it gave birth to thoughts that lay 'too deep for tears.'

"I am truly, your friend,

"JAMES MONTGOMERY.

"P.S. I may probably write a small article for the Sheffield head to-morrow, if I can hit upon a subject, and find anything to say.

"Mr. John Ray."

But, however irksome Montgomery may have found the slight demands of the newspaper upon his involuntary exertions at this season, he would doubtless have found any external necessity of literally keeping his own promise made to himself—to "do nothing"—still more galling. The sight of a moss-covered gravestone, with its nearly obliterated inscription, in Matlock old churchyard, presently excited his fancy, and suggested the verses on "A Hermitage." Other incidents led to similar results.

Mr. Rhodes, being on one of his excursions connected with his descriptions of "Peak Scenery," took Matlock in his way; and, as the day was fine, the poet agreed to accompany the tourist a short distance, and then walk back to his quarters. When they had proceeded about two miles, they saw a carriage standing in the road, and two gentlemen busily engaged upon the bank-side, and, as they thought, botanising. Mr. Rhodes was the first to go up to the strangers, when the bard saw one of them start, and flourishing a large hammer, exclaimed aloud, "Montgomery! Montgo-

* An old friend and neighbour.

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mery!" Our friend now hastened to the party, and his astonishment was perfect, when he recognised the fine, open, good-natured countenance of Chantrey, the sculptor, who, accompanied only by his servant, was geologising — as he ever liked to do — among the instructive limestone rocks of this section of his native county. "What! Mr. Chantrey," exclaimed the poet, "is it you? whoever could have expected to have found you *breaking stones on the king's highway!*" The three friends having enjoyed for a while this unexpected interview, Mr. Rhodes proceeded on his tour, while Chantrey and Montgomery together returned towards Matlock*, the carriage having been sent on before them. Before, however, they could reach the town, or any house, they were overtaken by a heavy shower of rain, and, having only one umbrella between them, they were driven to seek shelter under a hedge by the roadside. The rain continued, and their situation became unenviable enough. But it is the privilege of genius to derive gratification even from mischances: the spattering puddles presently formed a streamlet in the gutter; and a *fallen leaf*, which, after being caught and whirled about in the eddies, was finally carried off by the main current, afforded them a theme for moralising amusement. Montgomery, when detailing the incidents of this little adventure in a letter to Miss Gales, said, "You would have been much amused could you have

* Chantrey was at this time visiting at Willersley Castle, with Richard Arkwright, Esq. (son of the celebrated Sir Richard), in whose little church there he had just placed a monument. He would have Montgomery get into his carriage and go on to look at it; at the same time the sculptor introduced the poet to Mrs. Arkwright, who congratulated herself upon having obtained a visit from him before her sister-in-law (formerly a Miss Kemble) at Stoke Hall.

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seen the greatest statuary and the least poet of the age, huddled together under a dripping hedge, during a heavy shower, and intently watching the gyrations of a withered leaf among the puddles on the turnpike." On reaching his lodgings he composed the verses entitled the "Falling Leaf."*

It was also during this sojourn at Matlock, that he composed "The Alps, a Reverie,"† for a clergyman of the name of Trail, who printed the poem in a little volume of "Alpine Tales." These stanzas have led the ingenious author of a notice of Montgomery to describe the poet as having visited Switzerland, which he never had the luck to do, except in imagination.‡ The subject, however, had been familiar to him from boyhood, through the German poem of Haller on the Alps, which he read and partly translated at Fulneck school.

Oct. 19. Montgomery returned to Sheffield on the 18th of October, and on the following day Mr. Holland called upon him in the Hartshead, and was glad to find him visibly improved in health and spirits by his

* Works, p. 321. † Ibid. p. 309.

‡ "Among Montgomery's smaller poems, the finest is the 'Stanzas at Midnight,' composed in Switzerland, and which we see inserted in Longfellow's beautiful romance of 'Hyperion,' with no notice or apparent knowledge of their authorship. They describe a mood of his own mind while passing a night among the Alps, and contain a faithful transcript of the emotions which, thick and sombre as the shadows of the mountains, crossed his soul in its solitude. There are no words of Foster's which to us possess more meaning than that simple expression in his first essay, 'Solemn Meditations of the Night.' . . . Such a meditation Montgomery has embodied in these beautiful verses; but then he is up amid the midnight and all its solitude; he is out amid the Alps, and is catching on his brow the living breath of that rarest inspiration which moves amid them then and then alone."—*Tait's Magazine*, Sept. 1846, p. 547.

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sojourn at Matlock. The mention of Chantrey led to remarks on his portrait of the poet, which hung in the room. Mr. Holland said that, although slightly painted, he thought it a very correct, and certainly the most intellectual likeness that had been executed, though perhaps the features were, on the whole, more strikingly like in some of the profiles which had been made. *Montgomery:* "Other persons have thought the same. Mr. Nanson has a crayon sketch, taken in profile by Mr. Chantrey: he thinks it very like; and he ought to know my face well; for we smoked our pipes together for twenty years.* Of this the artist made two reduced copies; one for the small engraving which appeared in the 'Flowers of Literature' for 1807. The other I kept by me, till it was begged by a lady to whom I did not like to say 'No;' and now she and the sketch are both gone down to the dust!" *Holland:* "Have you seen the current number of the 'Investigator?' It contains a very spirited essay on the poetry of Byron, Shelley, Hunt, and others of that school." *Montgomery:* "It is not only a very clever, but a daring, article: many of the facts mentioned are new and striking, and betray to me the source from which they have been derived. I have little doubt but the writer of it is Mr. Raffles: one may often detect a writer in the sources of his information."

The first stone of a new church was about to be laid

* Many persons will doubtless have been surprised to learn that Montgomery was habitually *a smoker*. He began the use of tobacco, as we have already stated, in prison; he continued it afterwards in the company of his early political associates; and to the end of his life he closed the day with a single pipe — never more. We never knew him smoke when from home, except when Mr. Everett's guest; indeed, we had been tolerably intimate with him for some years before we ever saw his pipe.

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at Attercliffe; and the Duke of Norfolk, as lord of the manor and donor of the site, had expressed his willingness to officiate in the ceremony. As might be expected, the circumstance of the first peer of the realm, a nobleman of high and avowed Roman-Catholic principles, thus consenting to aid in the erection of a Protestant church, became a frequent subject of conversation at the time. "It will," said Montgomery, "be regarded by many persons as a mere political manœuvre, and will satisfy no party; churchmen will suspect the sincerity, and papists the consistency, of such an act of condescension."

Oct. 29. The ceremony of laying the first stone of the new church at Attercliffe took place: Montgomery was present; and with the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Fitzwilliam, the Earl of Surrey, and several other persons, breakfasted with the incumbent, the Rev. John Blackburn, at the parsonage house. Montgomery's hymn composed for the occasion, and beginning, "This stone to Thee, in faith we lay," was sung. We mention this, and other occurrences of the same kind, thus circumstantially, because it will be recognised as an interesting fact, that the revered subject of these memoirs had the honour of composing hymns to be sung at the foundation of not fewer than six or seven churches which were built in his time, and in his own immediate neighbourhood: and we distinctly specify the compositions themselves, in such connection, because when Time shall have cast the veil of age over the structures alluded to, and the hundreds of individuals who were present at their commencement, and the thousands who were the earliest worshippers within their areas — not seldom also in strains of kindred origin — shall have gone down to the dust, should the name of Montgomery so long excite interest, and these pages

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be read, it may be gratifying to members of succeeding congregations to be able to identify the very words of the Christian poet with the act of placing in the earth the corner-stones of those sacred edifices respectively. Nor, while recording this honourable distinction of the poet, ought we to pass unnoticed the unexpected munificence of his sovereign, who sanctioned the "Million Act," as it was called, nor the pious liberality of a nation which could at once raise and expend such a sum of money in the erection of temples for the worship of the only living and true God.*

The following letter is given in its original form, as it will supply an appropriate link in our narrative at this place:—

John Holland to the Rev. James Everett.

"Sheffield, Nov. 20. 1822.

"My dear Friend,

"I have this evening spent some hours with Montgomery at the house of our mutual friend, Thomas Champion, Esq., master cutler. We were invited to meet a lady from Canada, who, being at Sheffield, was very anxious to see the bard. He was unusually cheerful and talkative; the interview was highly gratifying, especially to the stranger, who had this opportunity of enjoying the conversation of a man whose poems she had so often read with delight on the banks of 'the mighty St. Lawrence.' Of Washington Irving Montgomery spoke highly; not forgetting to remark, that his name indicated a Scottish origin. On his saying that Moore's 'Loves of the Angels' was understood to be *almost fledged*, he was asked if he had ever seen the poet? He said he had not; but knew him to be a smart, highly-accomplished little man, all vivacity,

* Legal facilities for raising and supporting churches of a still more comprehensive character came into operation under Ecclesiastical Commissioners twenty years later.

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and neat and nice as if he were carved out of a piece of ivory : Chantrey knew him well. Mr. Champion expressed his admiration of Moore's 'Melodies,' especially the popular one — 'There's nothing true but heaven'*; and another —'And were not weeping Mary's tears, an offering worthy heaven?' These he wished to see copied into the 'Poet's Corner' of the 'Iris;' and was told he should, if possible, be gratified. In the course of the evening, Montgomery mentioned, somewhat to the surprise of all parties, that, often as he had visited London, he had never been in the House of Commons, and consequently had never heard some of the most celebrated speakers in that assembly— that he should especially like to listen to Canning on some occasion adapted to call forth his best powers. On Lord Milton [now Earl Fitzwilliam], as an orator, he made this happy remark: 'He is not an eloquent speaker; his manner is dry, and wholly unembellished; but he is always in earnest — therefore always interesting; and being generally well-informed, there is a deep under-current of strong sense in his remarks on any subject.'

"Speaking casually of architecture, he reprobated in strong terms the prevalence of those anomalies in the 'style' of the present day, which sometimes lead to the placing of an embattled tower upon a church in other respects built ostensibly on a Grecian model, or which ornaments with classic appendages certain piles of what is termed—not inaptly—'modern Gothic.' Our vivacious Canadian friend expressed her admiration and wonder at the size and beauty of York Minster, which she had just visited. Montgomery was not less enthusiastic in praise of this venerable building†; observing that he once saw it under circumstances of peculiar advantage in combination with atmospherical effect. 'Walking out,' said he, 'one morning on the banks of the Ouse, I came to a point from

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* See Montgomery's remarks on these verses in an after page.

† Alas! how much has it since suffered through *two* conflagrations!

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which the city and suburbs were entirely hid by the mist which lay around: presently the sun rose; and then the mighty mass of the Minster, with its magnificent towers, fretted pinnacles, and glittering vanes, rose slowly in solitary and sublime grandeur out of the fog, like an effect of enchantment: it appeared, indeed, for a time, as if actually seated on a cloud! It was one of the most striking and beautiful phenomena of the kind which I ever beheld.' *Holland:* 'I have always felt that a person visiting any of our ancient cathedrals, ought to know something of the language of architecture, otherwise he will be likely to resemble a person looking at the pages of a black-letter folio in a dialect of which he understands not a word — he admires the beauty of the typography, but is ignorant of the meaning of the text.' *Montgomery:* 'Technically considered, and with reference to criticism, it is so; but so far as *impression—feeling* are concerned, the reverse of your illustration is much nearer the fact: it is the business of the architect so to arrange the different parts of his design that they shall produce a grand and powerful impression *as a whole.* It is not, therefore, the details but the mass of York Minster which produces such a solemn impression on the mind, when viewed or entered for the first time, by any one having a spark of poetry in his soul, or a fibre of feeling in his composition.' The organ was mentioned — 'I once,' said he, 'listened to that organ with sensations which I can never forget. Several years ago I went to York with a friend, and, as it was growing dusk when we entered the city, we became solicitous to secure lodgings for the night; but as the election of a coroner was going on, the place was full of voters, and the beds at the inns generally engaged. After some parley with the landlady, at the house where the coach stopped, we were told we might be accommodated if we chose to sleep in an old unoccupied room — the *haunted chamber,* as we at once perceived! We had, however, no alternative, and in due time were conducted to the apartment. It was certainly large and dreary-looking enough; and contained four beds, of which my companion selected the one nearest the door,

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myself that nearest the window. We had not lain down long before I perceived we were not the only living occupants of the room — but there were at least plenty of *rats*. Of these disgusting animals I have a very sickening fear; and when they not only raced about, but seemed to approach the bed, I repeatedly shook the clothes, and made a noise to frighten them away; and my companion did the same. At length, however, we fell asleep. On awaking, long before it was light, I again heard sounds — not of rats running about, but of a person breathing most *stertorously*, and presently three or four deep groans, which the darkness and dreariness of an October night, and some misgivings as to the character of the old garret itself, rendered startling enough! I immediately sat up in bed, and exclaimed with some vehemence, "Mr. Ridgard, are you ill?"—"No," replied my friend, "but somehow I cannot sleep." Immediately there was a crash in the room, as if a man had fallen from the roof to the floor, and broken every bone of his body! We instantly both leapt up, and soon discovered that, as we had neglected to fasten the door, our landlord, as soon as he found we were asleep, had put a drunken voter into one of the other beds. We immediately rose and made our exit from the house; my friend pursuing his journey, whilst I, fretful and feverish from nervous excitement and want of rest, rambled out, not caring whither, till daylight. Perceiving the cathedral open, I entered, without at first noticing that there was any one present beside myself. In a few minutes the organ suddenly and unexpectedly poured forth its rich and solemn tones — the choir commenced an anthem! The music, the singing, the sacredness of the place, and, above all, the state of my own feelings, produced an effect upon me which I can never forget.' *Holland:* 'Was that nocturnal adventure the only one giving promise of a ghost, which ever occurred to you?' *Montgomery:* 'I was, I may say, more frightened by a bed-room incident about three years since. On my way to Bristol, I had to spend some part of a day and night at Birminghan to catch the coach at an early hour in the morning. I was exceedingly depressed in spirits owing to bodily suf-

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fering and other causes; and, as I did not expect to be able to sleep at all, I was unwilling to call upon friends, and would fain have stayed at the inn. A gentleman, however, who caught sight of me, insisted upon my taking a bed at his house. I reluctantly consented; and was, in this instance, put into a most comfortable room, where I expected no visitation from either rats, ghosts, or drunkards. I was lying quietly in bed, and enduring, as patiently as I could, intense bodily anguish; while the moon shone beautifully through the window, and illuminated the chamber. I had not lain long before I heard sounds of scratching, and concluded that even this otherwise comfortable room was not free from rats. The noise continued, and increased; but as I soon discovered that, by whatever cause produced, it came from a shut-up closet near the foot of the bed, I felt but little uneasiness. After a momentary cessation of the sounds, and just as I was musing how I might best get away without disturbing my friend, the closet door suddenly flew open, and *something* leaped upon the bed! I started up, and throwing the bed-clothes and myself at once upon the floor, stood a moment to listen. "Mew!" cried a stray *kitten*, which had been the innocent cause of my disturbance; and never in my life did I hear a kitten cry "mew!" with such grateful feelings as at that moment. This was the climax in my harmless experience of nocturnal terrors.' Thus, my dear friend, I have enabled you, in some degree, to share in the conversation of the bard in a party at which you could not be present.

"I remain,

"Yours sincerely,

"JOHN HOLLAND.

"Rev. J. Everett, London."

Montgomery told these stories in a strain of vividness and sensibility which is but feebly represented in the foregoing details, although, as nearly as possible, in his own words. The effect of darkness on the nerves, especially when cooperating with mental depression or

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some forms of bodily ailment, must have been more or less experienced by almost every person endowed with the common susceptibilities of humanity; but the peculiarly irritable organisation of the vital system of the poet, even when in its healthiest state, exposed him, in a singular degree, to strong shocks from slight causes.

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CHAP. LIII.

1822.

MEETING FOR THE FORMATION OF THE SHEFFIELD LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.—"CLASSIC SHEFFIELD."—ANCIENT AND MODERN LEARNING. — WILLIAM CAREY AND FRANCIS CHANTREY. — CHRISTMAS MEETING.—EULOGY ON SAMUEL HILL.—OFFENCES AGAINST TASTE.

On Thursday, December 12th, a most respectable meeting of gentlemen, called by public advertisement, took place at the Cutlers' Hall, Sheffield, for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of establishing a Literary and Philosophical Society in that town.*

* The "Iris" of the preceding week contained, as its leading article, what the Editor called "A History of Hallamshire from the Creation to next Thursday," in twelve chapters! In chapter xi. the writer says, "We know nothing in the soil of Hallamshire that will prevent it from growing philosophers, artists, and poets, equal to those of Greece; it may not indeed be the *Attica*, but it certainly is not the *Bœotia* of England. There is no deposit of brute matter in the waters of the Don, the Sheaf, or any of our mountain streams to produce *goitres* (thick necks and thick heads), and make idiots of those that drink them; nor is there any dulness in the air, warmed and rarified as it is with the smoke of innumerable smithies (would that it were more so!) to offuscate the understanding of our friends and neighbours. There are the men, the means, and the talents (may the public spirit not be lacking!) to take, in one day, a greater step towards permanent and systematic intellectual

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Dr. (afterwards Sir) Arnold James Knight was in the chair. He opened the business by an appropriate address; after which, the first resolution was moved by Thomas Asline Ward, Esq., and seconded by Samuel Bailey, Esq. Montgomery then rose, and submitting the second resolution, said:—

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I move that, in conformity with the views expressed in the antecedent resolution, an association be now formed for the promotion of polite literature and science, under the title of the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society. Though I am not a native of Sheffield, I have been longer an inhabitant of the town than the majority of those who were born in it. Having lived here the full average of a human life, and having spent the greatest, and what ought to have been the best, part of mine in this neighbourhood, I should be guilty of the deepest ingratitude if I felt not as much affection towards her who has so long fostered me, as I should have owed to her if she had borne me. Sheffield has not been a *step-mother* to me in the invidious sense of the term, and having now been for upwards of thirty years a member of her numerous family, I can this day remember nothing but kindness received from herself and her children; and if ever, in times past, I have experienced anything else, may I as utterly forget as I freely forgive it! I am, therefore, not an intruder in this meeting, nor have I acted presumptuously in accepting the honour which the committee for managing the preparatory business conferred upon me—to propose to my fellow-townsmen and neighbours the establishment of a Literary and Philosophical Society, to be begun this day, but to be perpetuated, I trust, while the mountains shall endure, and the rivers continue to flow

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improvement among us, than has been taken in one century of all those the memorials of which we have deduced from the beginning of things."

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through the valleys of this beautiful and populous district. I feel it, indeed, an honour which I may not have deserved, but which I will diligently endeavour not to disgrace, thus, as it were, to lay the foundation-stone of a school of literature and science, in which ingenuous youth now living amongst us, and generations yet unborn, may receive (if not the first impulse to awaken their talents) such nurture and instruction in elegant knowledge, with such facilities for improvement, and opportunities for exercising their minds, as their fathers, through a hundred successions of ages, never enjoyed before them, nor could have anticipated in this place before the present era, when useful education is extended to all classes of our community. It is at that decisive period of life especially, when—having finished his school studies, and entered upon business or a profession—the new member of active society (who thenceforward becomes his own teacher, or ceases to be taught at all) has need of every liberal encouragement and every effective auxiliary, to enable him happily to develope those powers above the brute, of which he feels himself possessed, yet knows not how to use with advantage, 'not having proved them.' The generous youth, thus struggling by the native energy of his mind to shape himself into the future man, and rise to the elevation for which he was born, may be compared to the incipient nautilus, at the bottom of the sea, swathed in the rudiments of a shell, which, by the motions and growth of its elastic substance, it gradually moulds into form, till both animal and vessel being perfected, in some moment of ecstatic instinct it weighs itself up from the womb of the deep, and in the sunshine and air of heaven sails gallantly along the expanse of waters.

"Mr. Chairman,—You have alluded to an epithet sarcastically attached, by the greatest poet of the age, to this town. It was in connexion with myself that '*classic* Sheffield' was noticed by Lord Byron. Her name and mine have received a passport to immortality, by being thus embedded together in the imperishable amber of his verse. If Sheffield be not ashamed of the conjunction, I shall never

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be so. The passage, indeed, does little honour to either of us, but it does less to the poet,—the praise which he condescends to bestow upon my 'genius' (to avail myself of his own word, not used ironically) being inconsistent with the sneer at my 'lost works,' over which, with sardonic pathos, he exhorts 'classic Sheffield' to 'weep.'

"Now, Mr. Chairman, I will take up this term of contempt, and I will venture much further than you have done in the use which you have made of it. This may appear impertinently egotistical in me, but it is not so; for Lord Byron's scornful allusion to Sheffield bears directly on the question of this day, namely, the capability of Sheffield to establish and maintain, with credit to herself, and advantage to her population, a Literary and Philosophical Society. The term *classic* operates like a spell upon our imagination: without affixing *to* it any definite meaning, we associate *with* it all that is great and splendid, beautiful and excellent, in the surviving pages of ancient authors, as well as all that is venerable, sublime, and almost superhuman, in the relics of Egyptian, Greek, and Roman architecture and sculpture, the severest and most enduring of manual labours. In these, for the present at least, let the writers and builders stand alone and unrivalled. They were *the few;* but what was the condition of *the many,* in the renowned regions whence we have derived those treasures of literature, and in which we inherit (as common property to all who have minds to admire them) the wreck of those stupendous structures of human art? So far as the epithet *classic* is an accommodated word, employed by a kind of literary courtesy to designate superiority of intellect and knowledge, I am bold to affirm that Sheffield is as *classic* as Egypt was in the age of Sesostris, as Greece was in the days of Homer, and as Rome was at any period between her foundation and the close of the third Punic war. I speak of the relative intelligence of the whole body of the people in each of those countries, compared with the actual measure of information diffused among our own local population within the

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boundaries of Hallamshire, the manufacturing district of which Sheffield is the capital.

"In all the *classic* regions of antiquity, whether monarchies or republics, knowledge was a species of freemasonry; none but the initiated were the depositories of its secrets, and these privileged persons were almost universally princes, nobles, priests, or men of high degree, including those who, from bent of genius, or other auspicious circumstances, were devoted by choice, or compelled by office, to the cultivation of letters and philosophy. The vulgar, the profane vulgar, the multitude, the million, were jealously and cruelly excluded from the benefits of learning, except in so far as these were necessarily and benignly reflected upon them in the kinder conduct and more affable manners of their masters and superiors; for long before Bacon uttered the immortal oracle—'knowledge is power,' the ancients were aware of that mystery, unsuspected by the ignorant, whom they ruled by that very power, the power of knowledge, both in spiritual and temporal dominion, as their subjects and their slaves. Now and then, indeed, an Æsop, a Terence, or an Epictetus, by the irrepressible buoyancy of native genius, rose from the dust of servile degradation, to vindicate the honour of outraged humanity, and teach both kings and sages, that in the thickest shell of a slave there is the kernel of a man, which only grows not because it is not planted; or when planted only flourishes not, because it is unworthily beaten down and trampled under foot by those who ought to have cherished, and pruned, and reared it to fertility. Oh, what a waste of mind and worth, what havoc of talent and capacity, of every degree and of every kind, is implied in that perpetuated thraldom of ignorance, wherein the bulk of mankind, through every age and nation under heaven, have been held, by tyrants as brutish as themselves, who knew nothing about knowledge, except that they feared it; or by the more flagrant injustice of those who possessed, but durst not, or would not, communicate it to the multitude! The aristocracy of learning has been the veriest despotism that was ever exercised on earth;

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for it was bondage both to soul and body in those who were its victims. Thousands and thousands of spirits, immortal spirits, have dwelt in human bodies, almost unconscious of their own existence, and utterly ignorant of their unawakened powers, which, had instruction been always as universal as it is at this day, and as it is in this town, might with Newton have unfolded the laws of the universe —with Bacon have detected the arcana of nature, by the talisman of experiment—or with Locke have taught the mind, with introverted eye, to look at itself, and range at home through all the invisible world of thought. Had this been the case three thousand years ago, the abstrusest branches of natural philosophy, and metaphysics themselves, might now have been as intelligible, and as certain in their data and conclusions, as the mathematics, and mechanics, or the abstract principles of jurisprudence.

"To return to the comparison which I have dared to challenge between our contemporaries in Hallamshire and the majority of those who constituted the wisest, most refined, and greatest nations of antiquity,—I may ask, what were the people of Egypt at the time when the learning of the Egyptians was the envy and wonder of the world, when even wise men from Greece resorted thither to accomplish their studies, and qualify themselves to be teachers at home? Methinks it is sufficiently evident, from the uniform character of immensity, stampt upon all the ruins of temples, palaces, and cities, as well as from the more perfect specimens of pyramids, obelisks, and statues yet extant in the land of Nile, that a number comparatively small of master-minds supplied the ideas, which myriads of labourers were perpetually employed to embody; and that the learning of Egypt was nearly if not wholly confined to the priesthood and the superior classes. Moses indeed was instructed in it, not because he was the son of a slave, but because he was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter. We have Scripture authority, too, for the fact, that long before the Israelites became bondmen to the Egyptians, the Egyptians had sold themselves and their lands to their king, for bread, during

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a seven years' famine. However intellectual, then, the rulers and hierarchy may have been, who planned those amazing monuments of ambition,—monuments, too, of the *folly* of ambition, the names of the founders, and the very purposes for which some of them were built, having perished from record,—the hands that executed such works must have been the hands of slaves. Men free and enlightened could never have been *made* what it is plain that these were —live tools to hew rocks into squares and curves, and pile the masses one upon another by unimaginable dint of strength, and the consentaneous efforts of multitudes, whose bones and sinews, whose limbs and lives, were always in requisition to do or to suffer what their hierophants and their sovereigns projected. The marvellous relics of Memphian grandeur, of which new discoveries are made by every successive traveller into the desert or up the river, are melancholy proofs that the vaunted learning of Egypt, when it existed, was as much locked up from the comprehension of the vulgar, as it is at this day from the curiosity of the learned, in those undecipherable hieroglyphics wherein it may be said to be embalmed. Had instruction been as general there as it is here, the key to those hieroglyphics could hardly have been lost to posterity.

"And what were the people of Greece in the age of Homer? Nay, we must first determine in what age Homer lived: whether he lived at all, and whether he was the author of his own poems. What, then, were the Athenians under the tyrant Pisistratus, who is said to have first collected the scattered songs of Homer, and united the loose links into that perfect and inimitable chain, in which they have been delivered to us; most resembling, it may be said, the 'golden everlasting chain,' celebrated in the Iliad, wherewith the Father of the Gods bound the earth to his throne; for in like manner hath this Father of Poets, from 'his highest heaven of invention' indissolubly bound the world to the sovereignty of his genius.—That the body of the Athenians then, and down even to the days of Pericles (another tyrant and munificent patron of the fine arts),

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were little skilled in reading and writing, is the almost inevitable conclusion to be drawn from the state of literature in reference to the means of diffusing it in ancient times. Before the invention of printing, the slow production, the consequent scarcity, and the enormous value of books, when all were manuscripts, placed the possession of them beyond the reach of the poor, and where libraries existed, few but the learned and the great could have access to them. The mode of publishing new works, independent of private communication, was by readings in the open market-place, the schools and walks of philosophy, or at the Olympic and other games when all Greece was assembled to witness the corporal and intellectual prowess of her most distinguished progeny. How imperfect as well as precarious these means of circulating knowledge must have been, we may judge by trying the experiment in imagination at home. Suppose that all the theological works to which the people of this district could refer were chained to desks, as the Bible, Common Prayer, and Homilies used to be, in the chancel of yonder church; and all the books on general literature approachable by ordinary readers, were attached to the tables in George Street Library, and were never allowed to be taken out nor even perused except under the eye of a sentinel with a drawn sword in his hand, for the protection of property so rare and precious;—how many, or rather how few, of the thousands who are now readers and book-owners among us, would avail themselves of privileges so painfully to be enjoyed? Would not the bulk of the inhabitants satisfy themselves with what they could learn of religion on the Sabbath? But the poor Greek had no Sabbath, on which, resting from toil, he might repair to the Temple, the Grove, or the Portico, for such instruction as priests and sages might deign to afford him. And would any, except those to whom literature was the daily bread of their minds, indulge an appetite for its dainties under the politic restraints of a public library so circumstanced? Morals and science, therefore, at Athens, were principally taught by word of mouth, and their lessons learned through the

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ear; the eyes of the vulgar had little to do towards the improvement of their minds, except as an habitual taste for painting and sculpture, of which the most exquisite specimens were familiar to them from infancy, tended to soften external rudeness, but added almost nothing to the stock of knowledge beyond the ideas of fine forms. Hence the Athenian artisan had scarcely a motive to learn to read, because if he possessed the power, he could have little opportunity to practise it. Writing, indeed, was a profession, and the occupation of a scribe must have been a profitable one, but of course it was chiefly exercised in the service of the wealthy, the learned, and the great; those who could afford to purchase books, and those who could not live without them. That the deficiency of instruction by means of lessons directed to the eye, was not compensated by those addressed to the ear, appears from an anecdote, familiar to every school-boy, but which may be repeated here for the sake of the twofold illustration of our argument which it affords. Aristides had incurred the enmity of his fellow-citizens on account of his pre-eminent virtues. A clown, ignorant even of his person, applied to him to write his own name for banishment on the shell used in the ballot of ostracism. Having complied with this request, the philosopher inquired what Aristides had done to deserve such a punishment. 'I don't know,' replied the fellow, 'but it provokes me to think, that he of all men should strive to be called *The Just.*' This story confirms my assumption, that the common people of Greece in her glory were not generally taught to read and write, and that not only moral feeling, but intellectual discernment, was much lower among them than with us. For example, Mr. Chairman, if the upright magistrate whom we expected to have seen in your place at this meeting had become so unpopular, I will say even for his good deeds, that it was determined to drive him from the neighbourhood; and if it were in the power of his enemies to do so by their votes,—some, no doubt, there might be who could not inscribe their names with their disgrace on the lists, but it is altogether

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incredible that *one* should be found at once so stupid and so reprobate as to *confess*, that *he* thought Mr. Parker ought to be transported for his virtue! The people of Sheffield, therefore, in respect to elementary literature, moral feeling, and intellectual discernment, are as *classic* as were the people of Athens, when Athens was the city of Minerva, and Minerva was most honoured there by works of genius ascribed to her inspiration.

"The founder of Rome appears to have been as much of a savage as might be expected of one who was suckled by a wolf; it was the genius and sagacity of his successor which established by wisdom what he had begun in violence, and gave to the 'eternal city' the principle of duration. Romulus had formed a body; Numa Pompilius lent the soul; he made his own soul immortal in it; and his spirit swayed the counsels and led the enterprises of its senators and warriors in every stage of its progress to universal dominion. If but for Romulus, Rome had never been, — it may be affirmed that but for Numa, Rome had not continued to be, or had never risen above the level of the petty commonwealths that surrounded and harassed it without cessation till they were all ingulphed in its vortex. This great prince, in a dark age, at the head of a horde of barbarian adventurers, by his transcendent policy and enlightening institutes, not only perpetuated the civil polity of the infant state on the basis of knowledge being power, but by virtue of the same all-conquering principle enabled the youthful republic, in the sequel, to extend her empire beyond the ditch over which Remus leapt, and was slain in it by his brother, — from the Euphrates on the one hand to the Atlantic on the other; and from Ethiopia, within the precincts of the torrid zone, to Britain, 'divided from the world.' But it was about the middle march of Rome,—between the destruction of Carthage and the civil wars of her dictators and triumvirs, — that I ventured to bring the men of Hallamshire into competition with her heroic progeny. The Romans laboured under the same disadvantages in acquiring and communicating knowledge as the Greeks, and they laboured

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under many more from the rough fierce manners of the plebeians, and the unquenchable thirst for martial glory that distinguished the patricians. Education, of consequence, was low among all classes, till after the reduction of Greece, when the polite arts of the vanquished brought the conquerors under the yoke of liberal instruction. How little, at that time, Rome merited the epithet of *classic*, we learn from the charge which Mummius, the spoiler of Corinth, gave to his soldiers, concerning the inestimable treasures of sculpture and painting which he carried thence, — 'Remember, that whoever damages or destroys any of these things, shall make them good again.' The highest idea of worth which this proud conqueror attached to these masterpieces of mind and workmanship, was, that they would adorn the barbarous triumph which he contemplated on his return to Rome. If such were the notions of the consul and the commander, what must have been the ignorance of the rank-and-file of the legions, who at home formed the mass of the citizens? Yet about this era flourished Ennius and Plautus; and Rome thenceforward rose as rapidly in letters as in arms, so that within a generation or two, Lucretius, Catullus, and Cicero had advanced the intellectual glory of their country to the verge of its consummation. Even in the Augustan age that followed, when we consider the base means by which the Roman people were bribed into slavery, held in gorgeous fetters, and their ferocious passions glutted with cruel and bloody spectacles to keep them from reflecting on their degradation, and conspiring against the new tyranny, — I cannot hesitate to declare my conviction, that in morals and intelligence, Sheffield, at this hour, is as *classic* as pagan Rome was in the proudest era of her splendid infamy.

"And now, Mr. Chairman, I might compare the attainments of our manufacturing community with the state of society in those commercial cities of Italy, at the revival of letters in the fifteenth century, to which you have directed our attention; — and I might assert without fear of contradiction, that Sheffield is as classic as was Florence, when, as

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you have told us, 'her merchants were scholars,' and when, as I may add, 'her merchants were princes.' Cosmo and Lorenzo di Medici are names that rank with the most illustrious benefactors of the Muses. And who was Leo X., of whose 'golden days' poetry has sung and eloquence declaimed so often and so rapturously? He was the son of one of those merchants who were scholars and princes, and to whose family literature owes more than to the hereditary possessors of any throne in Europe for ten centuries preceding.

"But I must come to the main inquiry, — What *is* the present character of Sheffield and the neighbourhood with regard to literature and the arts? This may be briefly answered. Thirty years ago, when I came hither as a stranger, there were two Charity Schools for the education of a hundred and twenty poor boys and girls, and there was one Sunday School Society, by whose means about a thousand children might be taught to read the Scriptures. I believe there was no other seminary for the refuge of those neglected little ones, whose parents could not or would not afford the expense of common learning. At that time, however, an extraordinary excitement pervaded the minds of all classes of the population, on subjects of great and perilous interest; the illiterate were not behind the best informed in political discussion; they thought, they read, they spoke, with an intensity of application, a clearness of understanding, and a power of words, which in the transporting effects on themselves, and the overwhelming influence exercised on others, I have often witnessed with wonder and admiration, however I might sometimes lament the ill-directed though well-intended ebullitions of native talent, untamed and almost uncontrolled. It seemed as if the whole mental energy of a peculiar caste of human beings, repressed for ages, but collected and condensed in the living generation, were bursting forth too rapidly and indignantly to be ruled by better reason and experience. The storm, however, passed away, and a season of peace ensued, which, with little interruption, has continued to this day. During

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that period, Sunday Schools, belonging to the Established Church and the other denominations of Christians, have so multiplied, that in town and country, throughout the district of Hallamshire, I presume there are not less than ten thousand of the poorest children taught lessons of religion and duty, which are calculated to make those who obey them, better, wiser, and happier than if they had been born in the same station of life among the greatest tribes of antiquity. In addition to these, the National and Lancasterian Schools afford daily instruction to nearly two thousand more, of both sexes, in such branches of useful learning as will fit them for self-improvement in after-years, to any height of excellence to which inclination, capacity, and opportunity may lead them. The possession of the Bible alone — including treasures of history, jurisprudence, poetry, and ethics, capable above all other books of informing, expanding, delighting, and exalting the mind, while the heart is purified,—the possession of the Bible alone, with the power of reading and understanding its wonderful and blessed contents, sets the humblest Christian among us above the most enlightened heathen philosopher in the true knowledge of the true God. If such, then, be the facilities of early intellectual culture, provided for the lowest of our artisans and labourers, by those who by experience know the worth of knowledge, there surely may be found among the latter class a sufficient number of persons qualified to commence and maintain with credit to themselves and advantage to the town and neighbourhood, a *Literary and Philosophical Society in Sheffield.*

"Sir,—I have never pretended, nor could I be guilty of such sophistry and falsehood as to insinuate, that Sheffield can boast of poets, historians, and philosophers to rival those of Greece and Rome; yet I am prepared to show, that, within the present generation, this humble corner of the kingdom has given birth to four men, each of whom may be placed in the first rank of Britons in their respective professions, whether science, literature, or the fine arts,—the late Mr. Jonathan Salt, in botany; Mr. Charles Sylves-

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ter, in experimental philosophy; the Rev. Joseph Hunter, in antiquities; and last and greatest of all, Mr. Francis Chantrey, in sculpture."*

This speech, of which some thousands of copies were circulated throughout the country, was unreservedly admired by every person who read it, with, so far as we are aware, the exception of two persons, only one of whom, however, raised a question "on the merits:" this was the Rev. Francis Hodgson, of Bakewell, who objected to that portion of the argument which claimed for the bulk of the good people of Sheffield a greater amount of intelligence than was possessed by a similar class in the most famous cities of antiquity at the brightest epochs of their civilisation. After a few words of apology, Mr. Hodgson thus addresses Montgomery:—

"Have you, then, sufficiently weighed the effect which the habit of attending public meetings, on the most interesting and spirit-stirring occasions, must have had on the minds of the Athenian *populace?* Have you thoroughly considered what the expansion of intellect and acuteness of reasoning engendered by such an exercise, such a *critical* exercise, of the powers of large and mixed audiences must have been? and this not merely as a speculative use of the judgment, taste, and fancy, but as the practical employment of the right of voting, on high and mighty matters of state! Only for a moment imagine a *multitude* capable of understanding and appreciating a speech of Pericles, as recorded by Thucydides,—the *general* fidelity of whose report there can be no reason to doubt,—I speak from experience, when I say that few British *youths,* without labour as well as genius, can *thoroughly* estimate the whole ingenuity and

* For the poet's particular eulogy on these Hallamshire worthies, *vide* Appendix.

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adroitness of the reasoning, and the adaptation of the orator's turn of argument to the immediate occasion; setting aside, of course, the difficulties of the language, and supposing them overcome. Again, will you suffer me to ask you, if you have fully thought of the result of the transcendent genius of the theatres, those schools of noble though imperfect morals, and of sincere though blinded religion? Just conceive what Sophocles, with his elevated principle and sense; Euripides, with his pointed and worldly wisdom, must have done to sharpen the wits, if not to control the conduct, of their spectators? Remember that the recondite elegance of these compositions was *generally* felt, and that they were *popularly* quoted — think of the captive soldiers in Sicily reciting their pathetic dramas and touching their brother Greeks even in the pride of victory? But I will not trespass on your time and thoughts any longer; I know if there is anything in what I have said, you will feel and catch it directly in much more than all its own meaning."

What answer Montgomery returned to his friendly critic we have not been able to ascertain; nor should we have introduced Mr. Hodgson's remarks — pertinent as they are — in this place, were it not that they were repeated to, and recorded by, a celebrated individual several years afterwards; from whose imperfect version they have been printed.

In the Diary of Thomas Moore, the poet mentions, Jan. 26. 1828, that he dined at Stoke Hall, in Derbyshire: Mr. Hodgson was present, and Montgomery had been invited, but did not make his appearance, for reasons which will be assigned under that year. After naming the absent guest, his beautiful writings, and the "dirty" town in which they were produced, the Diarist adds: — "He has lately, they say, issued some rather absurd speech or writing, in which he upholds this said Sheffield as little less than the Athens of

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England. This is what it is to be the *Coryphée* of a set of provincial blues."*

Now whatever ground Montgomery's speech may have afforded for Mr. Hodgson's doubts, it certainly affords none for Mr. Moore's assertion. There was not the slightest pretension either urged or hinted at on behalf of Sheffield, to anything like pre-eminence among similar large towns in England; the local bearing of the argument being as manifestly determined, as it was avowedly suggested, by Lord Byron's sarcastic application of the epithet "classic."

As to the really important question at issue between the Sheffield poet and his scholarly correspondent, we think that the former had a preponderance both of fact and argument on his side. It can hardly be necessary to remark that Montgomery had no design to undervalue the due importance of "classical studies," in the usual acceptation of the terms: nor did he either say, or wish to be understood to mean, that the common people of Sheffield understood Latin and Greek better than those of Rome and Athens; or even that the educated portion of them were more conversant with the written works of the ancient orators, philosophers, and poets, than many of their countrymen and contemporaries must have been. Passing over all this, therefore, and claiming for his townspeople collectively such an acquaintance with the "wisdom of antiquity" as the Delphin Classics in forty volumes might happen to have yielded to as many as could read the original text, and to others who only knew their meaning through translations, and then adding to these attainments—whatever they

* Moore's Diary, vol. v. p. 253.

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were worth—the results of modern learning, modern science, and modern information on general topics — the combined effects of education, the art of printing, political and social progress, with which the masses of the Hallamshire community, in common with those of other large towns were more or less familiar, how then would stand the case at issue? Surely, that in a given number of the poet's townspeople—and the more the better for his argument — taken indiscriminately out of any public assembly, and compared with a like number supposed to be taken under similar circumstances from Greek or Roman crowds, the average amount of intelligence — to say nothing of morality — would preponderate in favour of "classic Sheffield."

The other objection was wholly personal, and came from an individual who, strangely enough, was as little aware, during two years following, of the grievance of which he then so bitterly complained, as Montgomery was unconscious of having either in act or intention grieved one of the earliest and most active of his literary friends. In the sketch of Chantrey's outset in that career of genius which became so remarkable, the speaker omitted to mention William Carey, who, as already stated, had been one of the first to perceive, and publicly predict, the sculptor's high destiny. *Why* Montgomery made this omission we know not — most certainly with no design of injuring the character, much less of damaging the professional claims of the worthy connoisseur — a double wrong, however, under which he felt or fancied himself to be actually suffering! We might have passed the matter over entirely, or at most with a bare allusion, were it not that it led to a correspondence which was equally prolix and painful, and, we must add, was sustained with equal tact and temper on the part of the complainant, one of

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whose long letters ends with this bitter sentence:— "I close my epistolary correspondence with you for *ever!*" Happily, this "for ever" hardly lasted more than twelve months: for Montgomery, while he utterly refused to admit that he had either intended or inflicted injury, and consequently would neither apologise nor explain, as he was called upon to do, voluntarily embraced the earliest fair opportunity of making the *amende honorable* to the wounded feelings of his old friend. It is refreshing, after traversing the arid pages of this unhappy controversy, to overtake again, and leave the parties on the green paths of recovered good feeling: on this account we give the following letter, though somewhat out of place, and alluding to an event of a future year: —

William Carey to James Montgomery.

"37. Marylebone Street, Piccadilly, London, Nov. 25. 1825.

"My dear Montgomery,

"On my return from the country after a considerable absence, and almost wholly recovered from the attack upon my breast, I received with gladness your two newspapers, and I recognised with no common pleasure your most welcome handwriting in the direction on the cover. I read your speech at the late dinner given to you by the people of Sheffield with pride and admiration. As an effusion of honourable feeling and a narrative of interesting vicissitudes, I cannot find words or room to express my estimate of its excellence. As a specimen of eloquence delivered on an occasion so glorious to the genius and virtues of the speaker, it will live for ever. In what you have said of my poor endeavours to make known your genius in your outset, you have most nobly done justice to yourself and have done more than justice to those efforts of mine in which the will to do good was unlimited, although, unfortu-

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nately, the power was as nothing. Your words were rendered more impressive by the memorable season in which they were uttered. Late in the evening of your life, after having quitted public bustle as the conductor of the 'Iris,' and at a time when I, as your senior in the course of nature, look with resignation over the bounds of time, and expect, on some near approaching day, to enter upon another, and, I hope, a better world, you have placed, in the fulness of your heart, my early zeal in your behalf on imperishable record. In mentioning my anxious, earnest struggles to rouse the attention of his country to the genius of Chantrey, you have boldly and amply borne testimony to my conduct. After so eminent and conspicuous a testimony in the presence of the empire, who will venture an attempt to deprive me of that bloodless glory? The glory of having spontaneously borne a light before two such distinguished men as Montgomery and Chantrey, when they lay in comparative darkness, and of having lifted up the fearless outcry of my spirit, as their proclaiming herald, before their entrance on the career of fame, will descend as an inheritance of honour to my children.

"I rejoice in the hope that, now you are relieved from the fatigue and hurry of a periodical labour, public morals, and the best interests of humanity and of polite literature, will derive an increased advantage, and your name receive splendid accessions of celebrity from the pure and fervid inspirations of your muse. I will not trespass further on your kindness; but praying that God may give you many years of health and happiness to delight your friends, and to enjoy that most precious of all earthly consolations, the recollections of a well-spent life, I am, dear Montgomery, with sincere respect and regard,

"Yours, most truly,

"Wm. Carey."

Christmas day. — This evening, Montgomery, according to his custom during several years past, took tea with various teachers, ministers, and friends, at

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Queen Street Sunday-school. During the conversation the Rev. James Boden said, he thought the remarkable moral and political changes which had recently taken place in the Georgian Isles would form a good subject for a poem. Mr. Holland was of the same opinion; adding, however, that the execution of the work must be left to some native poet, perhaps as yet unborn, who might find in the first European missionary the Augustine of his country; the appearance of Mr. Bennet and his companion forming an episode. Montgomery concurred: in such a poem, said he, there would naturally be three divisions of the subject, each presenting details of intense interest,— viz. first, what the islands were in their original state, with all their horrid cruelties, remarkable superstitions, and striking scenery; secondly, the discovery of the islands by Captain Cook, and the consequences of the visit of the navigators, when the worst of European vices had been engrafted on the depraved simplicity and violent passions of the natives; and, thirdly, the present state and prospective condition of the islands, exhibiting, as they do, a most striking and wonderful change in the aborigines, not only from barbarism to civilisation, but from the grossest idolatry to the profession and practice of scriptural Christianity: "and although," he proceeded, "we dare not believe that everything which looks like true godliness is really such, — nor is it any breach of charity to conclude otherwise, — still there must be a large amount of true piety where, under such circumstances, there are so many striking indications of it: wherever a shadow appears, there must be something of substance." After tea he addressed the meeting: among a variety of observations, he said —

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"This social festival appears to me, as I advance in life, to recur after shorter, and still shortening intervals: this, I doubt not, my elder brethren perceive, as well as myself; and this the youngest of my friends present may live to experience. Many who enjoyed with us the festivities of last Christmas, are now no more! And this very afternoon, while our kind friends here were preparing this repast, a party of their brethren, in another place, were committing to the grave the body of one who had long been the active superintendent of a Sunday-school. I have known him in that character for seven or eight years; and a more steady, humble, upright, pious, persevering, and every way excellent man I never saw. During the last week he called upon me for a subscription in aid of one of those many works of mercy in which he was concerned: he then appeared in his usual vigorous health and strength; yesternight I received an invitation to attend his funeral, which, but for an imperative engagement at home, I should have accepted. I believe, from my heart, that in yonder churchyard, this afternoon, a seed was 'sown in weakness,' which at the last day shall be 'raised in power.' Indeed, so fully am I persuaded of the preparedness of that man to meet his God, that could I now be reinstated in the heyday of youth, with the promise of fifty additional years of life, in which I might enjoy all and more than all the honours I have received from man since the period when I first set up in my heart that vain and delusive idol of human applause which I have so long and intensely worshipped at the peril of my soul — I say, rather than voluntarily incur the dreadful risks arising from the repetition of such popular praise as even I have experienced, I would prefer to occupy that grave in which the remains of our friend are now for their first night sleeping, 'in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

Let the reader be told that the subject of this eulogy was a poor shoemaker! and it will be impossible not to be struck with the contrast between the position of

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Montgomery, the gifted poet, while delivering shortly before, to a delighted audience, his elegant address on the formation of the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society, and Montgomery, the humble Christian, a few days afterwards, paying this affectionate tribute to the memory of a poor Methodist, in a company of Sunday-school teachers. On the following evening he attended a meeting of the Wesleyan Tract Society, in Norfolk Street Chapel, when he again adverted to the deceased:—

"The monthly meetings of the Committee of this Tract Society *, which were originally held at six o'clock in the morning, were the first *private religious* parties I ever ventured to unite with in Sheffield: but in them, I declare, in the presence of this assembly, I enjoyed the purest and most spiritual intercourse which I ever experienced among my fellow-men. For the sake of being present, I — who am so infirm, and constitutionally indolent — have many a time left my warm bed on a cold winter's morning: but let the weather be as cold as it would, our hearts were sure to be warmed in the meeting. It was there, in that corner [pointing to a particular part of the chapel, then boarded off as a vestry] I first saw Samuel Hill. He was at that time a very poor man — so poor, indeed, that I recollect he could not always afford to pay his subscription of six shillings a year; but he was rich in faith, ripe in religious experience, and mighty in prayer: I declare before you all, that I never stood in the presence of *any* man with such trembling as I used to feel beside that humble individual. Good God,

* At a meeting of this society held the following evening, Montgomery delivered a more formal eulogy on the character of Samuel Hill, which he consented to furnish for publication on condition that Mr. Holland would prepare a brief memoir of the deceased. This joint tribute to the memory of a good and useful man appeared in the "Methodist Magazine," December, 1823.

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I thought, Thou hast given to that man, perhaps, only one talent; but how does he use it! Surely, the responsibility of some of us, who believe ourselves more largely endowed, but are not bringing forth even similar fruits, will be awful indeed."

He then mentioned how often he had made this good man the almoner of moneys which had been entrusted to himself for distribution by generous individuals.

It will readily be imagined that, frequently as Montgomery now appeared in public meetings, he must often have had to listen to speakers who evinced worse faults than the mere lack of mental culture: but where there was piety, earnestness, and the absence of affectation, he was never offended. Homeliness and rusticity in connection with that religious fervour which so often gives a beneficial energy to the poor man's character, he could tolerate and admire; while buffoonery—whether in the pulpit or on the platform—he utterly reprobated. We need scarcely remark that his conscience as well as his taste recoiled from all the so-called moral attempts to punish or abate offences against religion by caricaturing its ministers either by means of the pen or the pencil, or even by exposing their overt and really ludicrous faults to the laugh of the worldling. A clever rhyming effusion of this class having been presented to him for perusal and printing, he declined the latter service, stating, in a note of explanation to the author, that —

"Besides the objections, which grow weightier on reflection, against the effect of exposing persons in the service of religion, but not under its influence, to the satire which they deserve for themselves, — though it can scarcely be inflicted upon them except at the expense of what *is* sacred, — I have so many friends, and those so truly respectable and pious,

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among Church ministers, both here and elsewhere, that I think I ought not to risk wounding their sensibility by contributing to the disgrace, however merited, of a brother who is a disgrace to their fraternity. Will you allow me, on this candid acknowledgment, to retract my engagement to print your ingenious poem? You will easily find persons not bound or restrained as I am, and it need never be known that you applied to me at all."

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APPENDIX.

(A).

ENIGMA (*Rubor loquitur*). Page 56.

"*To the Editor of the Portfolio.*

"DEAR MADAM,

"I KNOW you love me—in my proper place; where that is, I leave you to guess at present; but though I am sure you will never have occasion for me on account of any of your pages, I hope you will not deny me room in two or three of them to tell you who I am, and to state a few of my grievances, which, however, are entirely out of your power to redress. But I am one of the race of valetudinarians, and to such, you know, it is a pleasure to complain. Pray don't say it is no pleasure to *hear* their complaints, till you have heard mine. Who am I? Indeed it is no easy matter to say that in more words than *one*. In the first place, I am no riddle, yet I am a very fit subject for one, and probably while I describe myself I shall speak in paradoxes; but you need not puzzle yourself to find me out as you go along unless I come *across* you; I trust my name at the end of this epistle will make all clear, and prove to your satisfaction that I have a special claim to a lady's countenance.

"I am neither a person, nor a passion, nor an abstract quality; neither a vice, nor a virtue; a member of the body, nor a feature of the mind; matter, nor spirit. Without

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form I am seen; without substance I am felt. I am simply—a motion. I come from the heart, and there it is that I am felt, and felt keenly; for, as I speak to the eye, whenever I appear, the heart feels as if it could be seen, and O which of

" 'The wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best,' *

even of your own sex, can bear to have a fellow-creature prying into the secret of her thoughts, all of which, especially those she is most anxious to conceal, seem to be betrayed the moment she perceives me approaching her; and truly they would be, if people understood me as well as they pretend to do, for though I am the infallible interpreter of the heart, my meaning is often misrepresented, as I shall show hereafter. I am peculiar to humanity; no brute animal, however endowed with instinct or sensibility, being capable of me. Though I belong to either sex, I am eminently 'the glory and the shame' of yours. The female, who has discarded me from her affection, has lost all sense of honour, all purity of heart; yet she, with whom I am most familiar, is the most abashed by my presence: her pulse throbs quicker at the thought of me; her fear of me brings me upon her, and the bare recollection that I exposed her to observation in public makes me visit her again in her closet. For the world she would not part with the fine feeling which attracts me, yet when I am with her she would give the world that I were gone. This is very remarkable, because there is nothing in nature more beautiful than I am; and, consequently, one would imagine there is nothing more desirable in the sight of woman,—especially as I am 'the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.' The poet beholds me in the rainbow and in the rose, in the clouds of morning, in the glory of sunset, in the orb of the full moon rising: the loveliest countenance grows lovelier at my touch,—nay, becomes *so* lovely that it is a sin to look upon it, for then a single glance, piercing the very soul, inflicts unimaginable anguish on the sufferer whom I am overpowering. I am always honest, but not always the type of

* Milton.

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honesty; indeed, I am so often the indication of guilt, that the vulgar and superficial are apt to think me uniformly so: this is the greatest hardship of which I complain. Something not fit to be named is roundly uttered or insidiously hinted in conversation, for the express purpose of wounding the ear of delicacy; and I instantly betray the consciousness of the young and uncorrupted to the grossness of the insult; hence it is impudently infered that they know more than they ought. Can anything be more cruelly injurious than thus to pervert the 'swift witness' of virtue into an evidence of depravity? None of your readers, I am persuaded, could be so profligate as to provoke, or so slanderous as to misconstrue me, in this manner; but should this letter, when the lucubrations of your correspondents are going down to posterity, meet the eye of one, in the form of man, who dares to speak what modesty dares not hear, and raises *me* to the confusion of innocence, let him beware lest I rise up to his face in the day of judgment, and overwhelm him with everlasting confusion.

"Hypocrisy may affect me, and force my resemblance, where I am never found; but it must be a dull eye that cannot distinguish her false colours, and despise her for deceiving nobody but herself in wearing them. Of all their other foibles and weaknesses your sex may be occasionally vain; a lisp, a mole, a cast of the eye, may be subjects of self-complacency, for nothing is too little or too mean for vanity; but of me you are never vain, except where I am not; and then a prude or a wanton may assume me to hide her want of me; but the exertion costs more than the counterfeit is worth, and I am seldom violated in this way. Permit me to exemplify a few of my miseries. Among half a dozen children, one has been playing a mischievous prank, unknown to the rest: they are suddenly interrupted in the midst of their sport by a parent or tutor, who denounces the offence, and inquires for the offender; four of them have presence of mind immediately to exculpate themselves; the rogue appears quite indifferent, and escapes by cunning equivocation or audacious denial; the sixth, the least likely

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in the group to commit such a trespass, feels me rushing upon him; the effort to repress me aggravates his misfortune; he trembles, sobs, bursts into tears, and is speechless. Thus, though the fault cannot be charged home to him, he must bear the imputation of it for no other reason than because he could not bear it.

"A friend in whose credit you imagine your own to be involved, says a silly thing before strangers; I punish *you* for it, and you do for him what he ought to do for himself. In a large mixed company some scandalous transaction is divulged; some absent character is the object of censure; some folly is maliciously ridiculed; some vice is ostentatiously exposed. Now there are people of both sexes, to my knowledge, whose nerves are so exquisitely sensitive, that, on these occasions, their spirits are instantaneously discomposed, and they manifest such ineffable perturbations as are easily mistaken for the workings of an evil conscience by those hardier mortals who are at all times so perfectly satisfied with themselves that they never suspect that anything can be suspected of them which is not absolutely and glaringly true. By such, the involuntary writhings of morbid sensibility are regarded as symptoms of self-accusing guilt, startled into remorse, like 'the conscience of the king' in Hamlet, when his crime is acted before him in a play; yet the very reverse may be the truth. These are very distressing cases, and perhaps they are more frequent than the majority of mankind who are luckily not blest with nerves of gossamer and spirits of ether imagine. Here then, the first time since creation that I have spoken in the dialect of men, seeing my own symbolical mode of expression is so ambiguous, I warn you and your readers to avoid forming hasty and unworthy opinions concerning individuals, otherwise amiable, on presumptions so slight and uncertain.

"I told you before that I was not a passion, yet of every passion I am the earliest and warmest adherent. In love, when the youth tells all that is in his heart to her who knew it all before he opened his lips, I give a glow to his eloquence which no art can rival, and an eloquence to her

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silence which no tongue can utter. In eagerness of hope, you behold me flushed with the liveliest emotion, and in the bitterness of disappointment deepening almost to blackness. In envy I rather vanish than appear; when I am gone, you remember that I have been, and I am followed by something of ghastlier hue than that which the grave hides in the visage of the dead. In pride I burn with a fierce and crimson flame which electrifies the eye that dares to look upon me. In rage I flash abroad like lightning, accompanied by instantaneous thunder. In jealousy I am wild and variable, gleaming out of darkness and shrinking into it by fits like the meteor of the marsh. In revenge I explode like the fires of Etna, long smouldering in ashes, but spending themselves in fury when once they have found vent. In joy, at the unexpected meeting of friends long parted, I come like glory from heaven upon them, making the face of each seem like the face of an angel to the other. O then—perhaps then only—I am truly and inexpressibly welcome. On such occasions alone, were it left to my choice, would I visit you and your readers.

"I dare say you have found me out long ago; if not, read the first five words of this letter, then peep into your glass, and perhaps you will see me. I ought to be ashamed of having troubled you so long, but I will not aggravate my offence by a foolish apology—you are a lady, and will excuse

"A Blush."

(B).

A DREAM. Page 95.

"*Recollections of a Dream.*

"My dream this morning was remarkable, on account of the circumstances under which it was impressed on my

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imagination. Yesterday evening I had engaged in conversation on the subject of dreams, occasioned by Coleridge's poem of 'Kubla Khan' (which I had just read), being composed, as he assures the public, during sleep, under the soothing influence of an anodyne. I observed that I had frequently, in early life, dreamed that I was reading the most sublime and enchanting strains of poetry for a long continuance; occasionally, also, I had recollected a few lines of these spontaneous, or rather these involuntary, effusions; but in general they were trivial, and I have been astonished that sentiments and expressions which in slumber had produced the most exquisite emotions of delight, were puerile and unaffecting when examined by reason awake. One instance I mentioned of a very peculiar idea being forced upon my mind, and I may say upon my conscience, while my senses were at rest. I was once exceedingly troubled in a dream (though I cannot call to mind another incident of it), from imagining myself most grievously injured in my character, by a calumny utterly without foundation. I complained to some person, who gravely answered me thus: —'This is a kind of retributive justice: you often escape censure when you deserve it; you must not, therefore, murmur at being slandered sometimes when you are innocent: it is only being visited, when you least expect it, with the punishment which was due to you when you *were* guilty.'

"I went to bed about an hour after this conversation, and though from habitual restlessness I lay waking nearly two hours, I do not remember that the subject at all recurred to my thoughts during the irksome interval. *When* I fell asleep I know not: the very watching for that ineffable moment which no human being ever saw to recognise it, prevents its appearance, though that appearance is the vanishing of everything else,—sight, feeling, [the consciousness of] existence itself dissolve together, till all revive in dreams. I *did*, however, fall asleep, and dream too; but no trace of my dream remained when I was awakened by a stoppage of breath, to which I am liable in sleep, by a par-

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ticle of phlegm gluing up (if I may so speak) the orifice of the windpipe. A convulsive effort to rise is the immediate effect, and I awake, as soon as I can gasp, in great horror. On this occasion, starting out of oppressive slumber in such a fit of strangulation, I heard the clock strike five, and the church chimes following. It was probably a quarter of an hour or more before I durst close my eyes again. The reason why I am so particular in stating the time and other minute circumstances will appear hereafter.

"When I fell asleep again, I thought myself in some chapel — *where*, I cannot tell now; but probably it was at Bristol, as my brother Ignatius was in some way or other connected with it. The sermon was on a particular occasion, and the preacher an extraordinary one; but I have entirely forgotten all that interested me then in either. When I left the place to return home, — but where my home was I am also ignorant, — I found by the way that I had lost, or left behind, my walking-stick, and I felt great want of it. Accordingly, I determined to return in search of it; but I was now in quite another part of the kingdom, — at the top of Long Lane, near Fulneck, though exceedingly altered from what Long Lane had been when I was a boy, and used to ramble in it. One thing I did not like in going back that way, though no such thing had troubled me in coming, — I must pass by a chapel in which a minister, whom I knew then, but not now, was beginning to preach; for I believe I heard the singing at a distance, and I felt a presentiment that he *would* see me as I stole by the door, and be angry that I did not turn in. However, I ventured; and I saw and heard no more of him or his congregation than I sought with my eyes and my ears as I hurried along the opposite side of the road.

"Presently, I found myself walking on a bank of earth, thrown up like a sea-mound across the country. At this time, though I cannot account for it, I had a walking-stick in my hand, but it did not look or feel like my own; it was both too tall and too stout for my convenience. Several persons were also in my company now; and still I thought I was going to the chapel where I supposed I had left my

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stick. Once by the way I slipped down the slope of the bank, but without much difficulty recovered my feet and the path. Then I began to reason about the stick in my hand, and had nearly succeeded in persuading myself that it was my own, notwithstanding the metamorphose it had undergone, when I was rather rudely accosted by a person, who met and stopped me, in the name of Dr. Henry * * * *, of Nottingham, — a gentleman, by the bye, in whose company I only recollect to have been once in my life, and with whom I certainly never had any acquaintance or transactions that could warrant him to take the liberty of coming into my head when I was asleep, much less sending a bailiff's catchpole to arrest me for debt in a dream! Yet so it was: the fellow presented me with a bill of parcels in the Doctor's name, making me debtor for five shillings and fourpence, (I believe,) the price of the walking-stick, and peremptorily requiring payment down, or I must take the consequences. The rascal further said that when his employer gave him this invoice, he, the Doctor, intimated to him that this was probably not the only paper which he, the bailiff, would have to show me, — meaning that a magistrate's warrant might be issued against me for stealing the stick, even if I paid for it according to his first demand. I remonstrated, but said I would willingly go with him to Dr. * * * *'s house — at Nottingham, I presume, for the scene was again unconsciously shifted; changes of place, time, and personal identity itself being common incidents in dreams. I maintained resolutely, however, that the stick was my own, and that I had left it in such a pew of such a chapel on such an occasion. The fellow was not to be convinced by my protestations; on the contrary, he almost convinced me that I had carried away the Doctor's walking-stick, by mistake for my own, from the place. The inconsistency of this with the circumstance of my having missed the stick before, and turning back by Long Lane in quest of it, I am not bound to reconcile. It is my business to state facts as they occurred, even if the occurrence of each overthrew by point-blank contradiction the very existence of all that went be-

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fore. In actual life, every event which happens must be in perfect consonance with every other; but in dreams every fact may stand alone, though not two in ten thousand be coherent. To return:—At length we arrived at Dr. * * * *'s house, and I found there a whole band of conspirators against my liberty and, for aught I knew, my life, for stealing his walking-stick. As soon as I entered the outer room, I pulled off my coat and neck-kerchief, and flung them on a table; for what purpose I really cannot tell,—certainly, I did not strip to fight the Doctor, *à la Mendoza;*—I only recollect I was conscious of having done a foolish thing. Immediately afterwards I was ushered into the presence-chamber of the learned physician and his friends,—my coat and handkerchief having, as far as I knew, of their own accord resumed their places on my back and round my neck, without me having had the trouble to put them on again,—at any rate, I missed them no more in my dream. The Doctor (who, by the way, was quite a different person in speech and feature in my dream to what he is in reality) and his associates were solemnly seated in a large and close semicircle round the fire, on the outside of which a chair was placed for me at the back of the middleman of the party. I requested them to open their line, and make room for me among them. I am not clear whether my humble petition was granted or rejected; but immediately afterwards I commenced a very animated vindication of myself with respect to the walking-stick, to whomsoever it might belong. Among other things, I well remember saying:—'Gentlemen, if you knew only half of the truth of this case, you would entirely acquit me. I suppose, however, this unjust accusation is the penalty due to me, on account of some fault which I may have committed long ago with impunity; as somebody in a dream told me that such justice was occasionally administered in this world. And, gentlemen, let me tell you *this* is a dream; in two or three hours it will be over, and then everybody will know that I am innocent!' I presume that this defence must have been satisfactory; but the transitions in dreams are so sudden and

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unconscious, that I cannot ascribe it to lapse of memory that I remember no decision, nor even any removal from the house, though I found myself soon after talking in the most friendly manner with Dr. * * * *, on the outside of a town, with the prospect of a beautifully cultivated country before us, in the middle ground of which appeared a stately palace. It was the last half-hour of twilight: the windows of the mansion were gradually and brilliantly illuminated, and magnificent fireworks were exhibited on the lawn in front of it. While I was inquiring of the Doctor concerning this scene and these signs of festivity, a waggon, drawn by many horses with musical bells tinkling at their collars, passed slowly along the road below the place where we stood: and amidst these sweet sounds I awoke. The clock soon afterwards struck six. I could not have been asleep more than half an hour, yet [the events of] more than half a day had passed in my dream."*

The foregoing memorandum, curiously elaborate as it is, does not appear to enounce a single fact beyond the phenomena of an ordinary dream of equal distinctness and duration, — unless, indeed, the idea of a dreamer urging the consciousness and matter of one dream in mitigation of the sufferings of another, while he still dreamt, be a novelty, — which we believe it is not. The concluding remark of the record illustrates the now generally received doctrine that, in dreams, no apparent succession of events, or variety of images occurring to the mind, occupy any specific duration of time in relation to the sleeper; in fact, that a whole phantasmagoria of diversified scenery or sequent actions may be impressed in a single moment of actual sleep.†

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* Extract from Orig. MS.

† Vide Macnish's "Philosophy of Sleep." Macnish was himself a writer of verse: in "The Bards" (Blackwood's Magazine, April, 1830) Montgomery is thus addressed:—

"Upon thy touching strain,
Religion's spirit fair
Falls down like drops of rain,
And blends divinely there."

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(C).

THE ACORN (An Apologue). Page 317.

"Thou wast a bauble once; a cup and ball
Which babes might play with: . . . .
Time was when, settling on thy leaf, a fly
Could shake thee to the root; and time has been
When tempests could not."

"A high wind shook the last acorn from an old oak. In the following night the tree itself was thrown down by the tempest. It had lived through five centuries; but though in that period it had produced millions of acorns, they had all been devoured by swine, or perished where they fell. Yet there was a prophecy, nearly coeval with the deluge, in the family, that from the fruit of *this* oak there should spring a mighty forest. Age after age the venerable tree had declined in strength, and decayed from the core, till the shell of the trunk and a stunted branch bearing six leaves and a single acorn were all the insignia of its ancient honours; age after age the venerable tree looked anxiously for tokens of the fulfilment of this prediction, in the growth of some sapling from one of its acorns. 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is *a tree of life.*' The old oak knew this; and to the last moment of its existence believing that He who had promised could not fail to perform, it prayed, even as it lay prostrate on the ground, that its orphan offspring, the sole survivor of its stock, might in due time be quickened, shoot up, and become the parent of a great family. While it was praying, the sap ceased to circulate through its rigid veins, and the old oak died, lamented by all the trees of the field. A hoary-headed man, who appeared far stricken in years as the tree itself, though but an infant in comparison with it, removed the relics and built an hermitage of them in a solitary corner of his grounds, whither he was wont to retire for devotion, and where he

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was at length found dead, in the attitude of prayer, with the expression of hope full of immortality in his countenance.

"The solitary acorn had fallen into the deserted nest of a field mouse, and the gigantic trunk of its progenitor descending close by, crushed the turf over its head and buried it alive. In darkness, alone, and immovably wedged, the poor acorn gave itself over for lost; and yet it could not but remember how merrily it had lived on the little bough that nourished it, dancing in the breeze, drinking the dew, and enjoying the light; it could not but remember the radiance of the sun, the beauty of the moon, the multitude of the stars, the verdure of the earth, the diversity of hill and dale, the river rolling at the root of its aged sire; it could not but remember the sounds of winds, and birds, and waters, the motions and colours of the clouds, the forms, voices, and actions of men and animals, which it had remarked during its nonage above; — it could not but remember these, and remember them with regret, — regret acuminated to despair, in the apprehension that soon it must cease to hear, and see, and feel for ever.

"While the acorn lay thus ruminating on its helplessness, insignificance, and misery, it heard, or thought it heard, a voice from heaven, saying to it, '*Produce an oak!*' '*Produce an oak?*' repeated the acorn to itself; 'that's impossible; no, it is not impossible; with God nothing is impossible, and if He commands me, *I can* do it, and *I will* do it.' The acorn had well learnt this lesson of faith from its parent — that the Ruler of the universe always gives power to his creatures to do what He requires of them.

"Immediately through every nerve of its frame it felt a spirit in motion; and the germ between its double kernel, though small enough to pass through the eye of a needle, received a consciousness that a whole tree — roots, bark, bole, branches, leaves, and future fruit — lay folded, with exquisite minuteness, in the fairy casket of its bulb. There was no self-delusion in the acorn; it had humbled itself, and it was about to be exalted. From that crisis, though the shell and the kernels began to waste away, the germ fed

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upon them; presently it swelled and put forth fibres which insinuated themselves through the soil to secure a permanent foothold. In spring there appeared above ground a tiny shoot, which opened and presented

—— "'two lobes protruding, paired exact.'

"The new-sprung plant was lower than the blades of grass that rose in myriads around, and looked down contemptuously upon it as a stranger, whose shape was uncouth, and whose language they did not understand.

"Hours, days, weeks, months, passed rapidly away, and so did the grasses, but the offspring of the acorn survived them all, and continued to grow till it became a sprig, with two full-formed leaves, and a bud between them, which tempted the bee and the butterfly to alight on their way, while the grasshopper chirped at its foot, or skipped over its head; nay, so vigorously did it push forth on the right and on the left, as well as upward, that the cowslip was compelled to hang its blossoms awry to make room for the sylvan intruder. Now, year followed year, till the sprig became a sapling, and one generation of men died after another, while the sapling expanded into an oak, and the oak advanced through two centuries towards maturity. All this time the tree from the acorn had preserved its innocence and its humility; though rooted in the earth, it aspired towards heaven: the nourishment which it drew from the soil, the river, and the atmosphere, it received as the bounty of Providence, and it was thankful.

"Meanwhile, the occasional lightnings played harmlessly around its head, and the tempest that agitated it above caused its roots to strike deeper below. Thus flourished the oak, the pride and the admiration of the whole country. The birds roosted and sang among its branches. The cattle chewed the cud, and reposed under its shelter. The lambkins in April ran races round the mound which its roots had upheaved from the plain. Man approached it with veneration, and as he lifted up his eyes at so magnificent a spectacle, he

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glanced beyond it to the sky, and thought, 'How much can the Creator confer on one of his inferior works! much of Himself may be seen even in a tree!'

"But one thing was wanting to consummate its felic the oak was barren; not an acorn had ever glistened i rough cup on the most luxuriant of its boughs, though t foliage spread thick and beautiful to the sun, and rustled musically to the breeze; and though autumn in its turn brought a second spring of leaves, so delicately tinged that they seemed to be the blossoms of the first. Now it came to pass, during a hard winter, that an old raven, driven by stress of weather from the sea-coast and travelling far inland, alighted one cold, clear morning on the topmost twig of the oak. Though stripped of its summer attire, the grace and majesty of its form were the more striking in the fair proportions of its tall stem and naked branches, here and there tufted with brown clusters of dry leaves, of which now one and then another fell,

——"'slowly circling through the waving air,'

to the ground, where thousands of their brethren lay strown at the feet of their parent, in all stages of decay; some brilliantly bespangled with pearls of ice, and many so curiously pencilled with hoar-frost, that every vein was distinguishable. The raven, who was thin of plumage, and iron-gray, looked as if he had seen better days, but would never see such again. Age and adversity had soured his disposition, if ever it had been good, so that hecould no longer behold happiness without envy, nor contemplate innocence without hankering to betray it; for happiness he knew was inseparable from innocence, and rarely, if ever, associated with guilt. While he sat shivering in the wind, that lifted up his ragged feathers with every breath, his lank sides were exposed to the chaffinches and redbreasts that hopped on the lower branches, peeping askance at the stranger, wondering whence he came, and thinking not a whit the less handsomely of themselves and their gay plumage in comparison with him.

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"Now Ralph was a soothsayer; and many an evil omen had he exhibited to the poor fishermen on the coast where his haunt was, soaring delighted in anticipation of the storm, and preying, when it was over, on the carcases of the shipwrecked mariners. As he understood all languages that were spoken in the days of fable, he quickly entered into conversation with the oak, wormed out its whole history, and was sagacious enough to discover, what the tree itself scarcely suspected, that, innocent and happy as it was, secret anxiety had begun to corrode its heart, lest, notwithstanding its health, strength, and virtue, and notwithstanding the ancient prophecy, it might at length die without issue, there being little hope, after such an age of sterility, that it would yet become fruitful.

"The subtle raven caught his cue, and by a train of sophistry, of which history has not furnished the particulars (perhaps lest others who are not trees should be beguiled by them), he succeeded in persuading the oak that it was such a favourite of Providence that the course of nature was suspended with respect to its destination, and it was either governed by such a mysterious heavenly influence, or had within itself such an original power, that it could *do* or *be* whatever it pleased: thus, instead of propagating its species by acorns, it might continue to increase in bulk, in height, in breadth, in depth, in strength, in everything, through an illimitable period of time, till the heavens were filled with its branches, and the earth overcanopied with its verdure.

"The oak listened unsuspectingly to the tempter, whose plausible insinuations soon perverted its simplicity, and it began indeed to think that all that it was it had made itself, and it had only to go on growing for ever by its own volition to become as great and as glorious as the raven had prognosticated. 'If,' said the poor dupe within itself, 'when I was an acorn I wrought myself out of the ground, and have since risen by my own choice to be the noblest tree in the universe, why should I rest here and not go on to magnify my form, till my trunk towers above the clouds, and sustains in mid-heaven a burthen of boughs more

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numerous and ample than the forests on a thousand hills, thus in my own person accomplishing the ancient prophecy, instead of dying, as my predecessors have done, in the vain hope of leaving innumerable posterity?'

"Off flew the raven to the left hand the moment his blandishment had prevailed, and the innocence of his victim had departed from it; leaving it to the indulgence of proud imaginations, and to the sad consequences of its apostacy. Early in the succeeding spring, at the first motion of the sap from the root, when the noon-sun was warmly shining, the oak heard the same voice from heaven, which once called it out of the kernel, saying *now* to it, '*Produce acorns.*' '*Produce acorns!*' indignantly it repeated, '*No;* I will produce *oaks!* My slenderest twig shall be a tree as mighty and as ramified as I myself am at this hour.' Forthwith, as it fondly imagined, the vain boaster began to exert its native energies, and to strain through every fibre to enlarge its dimensions; but its bulk remained the same as before; it had reached a standard which it never could exceed. Spring vanished, summer followed, and autumn found the oak laden with — acorns! They were shaken to the ground; the swine devoured them; none took root. The oak was mortified and enraged, but not humbled. 'I will do better,' it exclaimed, 'next year.' And yet it scarcely believed itself, for there was a strange misgiving in its mind which it durst not acknowledge and feared to investigate.

"The next year came, and the next year went. What did the oak? In spite of itself it produced acorns as before — but only to feed swine; not a single one was quickened. Still it would have hardened itself in rebellion against its Maker; but during the first frosty night of the winter ensuing, it was awakened by a pang at the core as if an arrow had glanced through it, and the wound had been instantly healed. An arrow *had* passed through it, but the wound was *not* healed; it was the arrow of death; and though the anguish at the time was only momentary, disease, decay, and dissolution had seized upon its vitals, never

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to relinquish their prey till they had consumed it atom by atom. The offender was roused to reflection: it was convinced at once of its mortality and of its guilt. Shame, remorse, and self-abhorence followed; the whole winter was a season of self-humiliation; till the oak was contented to be whatever its Creator had made it, and resigned to suffer whatever his justice might hereafter inflict. The next spring had far advanced, but long storms and late frosts had retarded vegetation, when, with the appearance of the first swallow, hope revisited the heart of the penitent; and a few weeks afterwards, while the nightingale was singing from a lowly bush at its foot, a third time the oak heard the voice from heaven, more welcome than before, and sweeter than all the sounds in creation besides, saying, '*Produce a forest.*' 'Thy will be done,' replied the humbled tree: and immediately it felt as if a curse had been taken away, and a blessing poured down upon its head.

"Ere long its buds unfolded into leaves, and in autumn its branches were bowed with the weight of fruit. Frequent and violent winds scattered the acorns abroad as they ripened, and heavy rains upon the adjacent hills bringing down the soil upon them, or washing them into temporary channels, many remained buried during the winter; and ere the harvest of another autumn was ready to be shaken from the boughs of the parent tree, a nursery of its descendants was springing up in the neighbouring fields. Year after year the fruits of the oak were carried further, multiplied thicker, and rose higher over the face of the country, till at the close of its third century it stood in the heart of the most flourishing forest in the world, itself to the eye still in fulness of vigour and beauty, and unrivalled by the stateliest of its progeny, though the death-wound received a hundred years before was invisibly undermining its strength, and hollowing its trunk.

"About this time the old raven, who still survived (and like the Wandering Jew, it was said of him that he could neither die nor rest), returned to that place; but his eye was

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so dim, and the scenery so changed, that he knew it not again, till the oak, amidst the forest of its sons, saluted him as he flew languidly over their heads. Ralph alighted on one of the arms of his old acquaintance, and silently hearkened to the sequel of its story; at the close of which he fluttered for a moment on his perch, then uttering an ominous croak, fell headlong, and lay dead in the hollow of one of the protuberant roots of the tree, which he supposed had long ago been blasted by lightnings or mildew for exercising the presumption which he had taught it.

"The oak yet lived two hundred years; its offspring and their descendants to the fiftieth generation still increasing and multiplying, to the east and to the west, to the north and the south, till the river on whose banks it stood, and which for thousands of years had rolled in broad sunshine through a champaign of meadows, became half-overshadowed with the kindred branches that on either side stretched to intermingle their arms, but succeeded not entirely; a line of light and a current of cool air passing uninterruptedly down the middle of the stream, amidst the depth of the surrounding woodlands. At length came the last hour of the patriarch of trees. It fell not by the fury of the wind like its father, nor by the assaults of the axe by which thousands of its juniors had fallen before it; but on a calm and golden summer eve, just as the sun went down, the oak sunk to the earth under the silent weight of years, and at the gentle touch of nature, loosening at once its whole burthen of infirmities: it lay down so quietly to repose, that the squirrel and her young, whose nest was in the hollow of the fork where the lowest branches diverged from the bole, were undisturbed by the motion, and wondered next morning to find themselves so near the ground. But the remains of the oak were not left to rot into dust and oblivion; man knew their worth; he removed them, and wrought the knotted fragments of the trunk, and the knee-timbers of the undecayed boughs, into the flanks and the keel of a vessel, which afterwards circumnavigated the globe.

"Here is a long fable; and what is the moral? Take it in

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the words of the Scripture; they are so brief that they might be written within the cup of the acorn, and so important that they ought to be engraved on the tablet of every heart: '*God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*'

"Sheffield, Feb. 1818."

(I).

EULOGIES ON JONATHAN SALT, CHARLES SYLVESTER, JOSEPH HUNTER, AND FRANCIS CHANTREY. Page 351.

THE following are Montgomery's remarks on the four "Hallamshire Worthies" whose names are referred to in his speech on a preceding page.

"Botany might be presumed to be the last walk of science in which a Sheffield manufacturer would be found; yet within my remembrance there lived in the heart of this town ONE, who was attracted into that path by a peculiarly delicate sense of whatever is beautiful and curious in the lowliest productions of nature. The late Jonathan Salt — for he is now no more — engaged in this interesting pursuit with such patient ardour and uncloyed delight, that he not only acquired a correct and comprehensive knowledge of plants, but was regarded by the first professors of his day as an ornament and a benefactor to the science, having by his elaborate researches, and discoveries even in this neighbourhood, added something to the stock of general information. A late friend of mine *, highly gifted with genius, and ac-

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* The Rev. Henry Steinhaur. His name is perpetuated in a species of *Stigmaria*, a fossil vegetable which occurs abundantly in the ganister beds about Sheffield, and which he was the first carefully to figure and describe.

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complished in every branch of natural philosophy, was so charmed with the genuine intelligence of Mr. Salt on subjects with which few have more than a showy acquaintance, that he considered an hour in his company, when they could freely interchange thoughts (giving and receiving fresh hints on their favourite topic), as an hour of privileged enjoyment. With a pleasure which none but botanists can know, — for such congenial spirits do not encounter every day, — they were wont to welcome each other when my friend came to Sheffield. On such occasions, while I have watched their countenances and hearkened to their discourse, though from my ignorance I could enjoy but little of the latter, the expression of the former was perfectly intelligible, and highly exhilarating to a spectator who had anything of human sympathy about him. I have known Mr. Salt mention a certain rare plant as growing in this neighbourhood, when my friend, for joy scarcely believing that there was no mistake, desired to be conducted immediately to the spot, and away they went into the depths of the Old Park wood, where the one had the triumph of showing his discovery, and the other the joy of seeing for the first time (I believe) on British ground, the coy recluse, which was then in full flower.

"There must have been a native elegance in the mind of him who could thus attach himself to a solitary study, in a range beyond his ordinary occupation; and there must have been an unconquerable love of the science in that man, who, in such circumstances, could make himself master of its terminology (the engraftment of all manner of barbarian words on a classic stock) and its technical phrases, borrowed from a language in which he was unskilled, except in its adaptation to botany. I cannot choose but envy the pure transports of an enthusiast, who could quietly steal away from the bustle, and care, the dirt and meanness (if I may hazard such a term here) of the warehouse and the workshop, and visit, according to the season of the year, one locality or another, within his pedestrian circuit, where he knew that he should meet with peculiar plants, that flourished

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there and nowhere else. Conisbrough, the Woodlands, the High Moors, the Peak of Derbyshire, were so many rounds of amusing excursion to him. On every hill, and in every valley, he was welcomed and accompanied by *the Flora* of the scene, who showed him her loveliest children, crowding in their path, or beautifully scattered throughout her little domain. He is gone, and the places that knew him know him no more. Who among our youth will tread in his footsteps, and be the heirs of his innocent pleasures in the fields both of nature and of science? His humble name and praise deserve an apter eulogist than I am. Such as they are, however, these few flowers of speech are gratefully scattered upon his grave by one who at least knew how to respect his modesty and his worth.*

"Of another and a bolder cast of mind was Charles Sylvester.† He resolutely broke through every obstruction of narrow circumstances and defective education, and with an energy of thought which no difficulties could repel, forced his passage through all the intricacies of experimental philosophy, in search of truth; not merely that he might know what others knew, but that he might find what none had found before. Of him I may say (accommodating the language of Dr. Johnson respecting Goldsmith) that there was scarcely a subject of physical science which he did not touch, nor one that he touched which he did not adorn, by throwing some new light on an obscure part, or enriching an impoverished one with some valuable acquisition. Galvanism had begun to excite the curiosity of the learned throughout Europe, at the time when Mr. Sylvester was working his way to knowledge and distinction. He seized the novel wonder of the day, and by a series of rigorous tests, with apparatus of his own construction, and in a great measure of his own invention, he added largely to the small stock of facts already ascertained respecting its nature and

* His beautifully prepared "Hortus Siccus" is now in the possession of the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society.

† Of whom there is a bust by Chantrey.

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phenomena. Zinc was a metal comparatively little known and less esteemed, when he, in the course of his galvanic operations, was led to search into its properties. In a happy moment he discovered its ductility; and thus, by rendering this refractory substance malleable, our townsman has at least secured an immense reserve of metal, which may hereafter be substituted for copper in plating the bottoms of ships, and in the manufacture of various domestic utensils, should the supply of copper fall short, or the price from other causes become too expensive. Latterly he has been employed (as at Buxton, by the Duke of Devonshire) in the architecture of baths for health or luxury, and in the application of air-stoves for diffusing heat through large buildings, on principles carried to perfection by himself. I have been told that it was Mr. Sylvester who fitted up with culinary and other warming apparatus, the vessels now on their voyage to discover a north-west passage, or to ascertain that it cannot be discovered. Our brave countrymen at this hour, in some region of eternal ice, may be enjoying the comfort of an English dinner; for the means of preparing which, in a polar clime, they are indebted to the ingenuity of a native of Sheffield.

"The Rev. Joseph Hunter, now of Bath, has done honour to this neighbourhood by a different exhibition of talent. He indeed had the advantage of better early instruction than either of the two former worthies; to which a classical education was afterwards added. His late work, entitled 'Hallamshire,' has not only most accurately illustrated the place that gave him birth, in a topographical view, and given him a name among the first antiquaries of the age, but the spirit and ability with which he has portrayed the men and recorded the events of ages gone by, raise him to the dignity of an historian, since on the annals of a small district his pen has conferred the dignity of history. There is a splendid and affecting prediction towards the close of the first Georgic of Virgil, in which the poet, alluding to the field of Philippi, yet reeking with slaughter, anticipates the time when the husbandman, ploughing the long-fallowed

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ground, shall turn up weapons of death corroded with rust, and stand in amazement to see, disinterred at his feet, the mighty bones of heroes that fell amid the conflict when Roman slew Roman, in worse than civil wars.* After the lapse of many generations, Mr. Hunter† has passed his antiquarian plough over his native soil, and if he has not dislodged rusty javelins, empty helmets, and giant-skeletons, he has done much more. While we range over the adjacent country, with his pages in recollection, we see Hallamshire as it was, not less than as it is. He has rebuilt the castle at the bridge, and the Manor House on the hill; he has raised from the dust into life and activity again the Talbots and the Howards of the old time. In pomp of chivalry, and followed by long retinues of vassals, our imagination may behold them parading through their magnificent park, where the trees of centuries (long fallen before the desolating axe) are reinstated in their ancient grandeur, and stand thick over all the ground. Nay, within the very enclosure, hallowed by many a sad as well as proud remembrance, where Mary of Scotland, during her cruel captivity, was ac-

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* "Scilicet et tempus veniet, cum finibus illis
Agricola, incurvo terram molitus aratro,
Exesa inveniet scabra rubigine pila;
Aut gravibus rastris galeas pulsabit inanes,
Grandiaque effossis mirabitur ossa sepulcris."
Georg. i. 493—7.

"The time will come, when in this dreadful field
The ploughman shall upturn the spear and shield,
With rugged harrow strike, 'midst clotted dust,
The hollow helmet, half-consumed with rust;
Then stop, and gaze in silent wonder there
On mighty bones of warrior-forms laid bare."

† This detailed recognition of the merits of the local worthies named in the text, probably suggested to Mr. Hunter himself the interesting paper, afterwards published on "The Connection of Bath with the Literature and Science of England," which he read in 1826 before the Literary and Philosophical Association of that city, where he was then residing.

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customed to wander and weep with her faithful adherents, we may follow her footsteps, — not only in the light which our learned topographer has thrown around them, but led by a minstrel of her own sex*, now living (I believe *born*) where she was a prisoner, and who has sung her sorrows in numbers worthy of the theme, and alike honourable to herself and the poetical character of this vicinity. †

"And now I may mention a greater name than any of these. Francis Chantrey was not, indeed, a native of this town ‡, but having been born at Norton, in Derby-

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* Miss Mary Roberts, of Park Grange.

† Mr. Hunter felt and acknowledged the compliment in a manner befitting his just appreciation of the *laudari a laudatis;* it was, he said, the most grateful reward which he had received for the work alluded to by the speaker—a work which, *we* must be permitted to add, exhibits alike in its style, its candour, and its information a model of Local History.

‡ One of the Sheffield newspapers, in its report of this eloquent speech, having represented Montgomery to have claimed "Mr. Chantrey as a Sheffield man born," Samuel Shore, Esq., of Meersbrook, laudably anxious to secure the credit of the sculptor's nativity for the adjacent village of Norton, in the county of Derby, wrote two long letters to the poet, desiring him to correct the supposed mistake in his authorised version of the speech. The following passage is interesting:—"Mr. Shore adds, for Mr. Montgomery's own perusal, that Mr. Chantrey's father and grandfather lived at Jordanthorpe, in the parish of Norton, and were tenants to the Norton Hall family (the Shores). He remembers them both very well: they were country carpenters, and rented a small farm under the proprietors of Norton Hall. Mr. Chantrey's mother is still living at Jordanthorpe [where the sculptor was born]; the shops and buildings attached to the farm have been all, or nearly all pulled down, except a small house, in which Mr. Chantrey's mother now resides. She married again after the death of Mr. Chantrey's father, and her name is now Hall; her second husband being also dead. [Mrs. Hall died in 1826.]

"Mr. Shore has not mentioned these particulars on the other side [of the sheet], as possibly some persons might not think it right to do so, though there is nothing disadvantageous to Mr.

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shire (four miles hence), within the limits of this Corporation, he belongs to us and is one of us. Whatever previous

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Chantrey attending them. On the contrary, it is highly to his credit, and much to his honour, that he has raised himself to great eminence and distinction by his own laudable attention and industry; and, as far as ever came to Mr. Shore's knowledge, always with a regular good character, which has sometimes not been the case with eminent artists.

"Perhaps Mr. Montgomery may lay in a claim for Sheffield to have been the nurse to Mr. Chantrey's genius[a], as he was an apprentice to a carver and gilder there; but there is a prior and powerful claimant in opposition to that, as Mr. Chantrey had an aunt by the mother's side, who was particularly skilful in moulding small figures for the ornamenting of desserts, and she has laid claim to have been the nurse and instructress of his genius, long before he could know anything of Sheffield.

"There is," adds Mr. Shore, "a large, full-length picture upon wood at Norton Hall, of a Francis Chantry, who is said to have been huntsman to Mr. Stephen Offley[b], and possibly of his uncle and predecessor, Cornelius Clarke. He is said to have been a yeoman, with some landed property. He appears to have been a tall man: there are in the picture some favourite hounds, and a little man who was the dog-feeder. This Francis Chantry is said to have had so strong a voice, that [living at Coal Aston, a distance of about two miles], he could stand on the hill near his residence, and shout so as to make the dog-feeder and keeper hear him at Norton Hall, when he wanted the hounds to come that way. He was apparently a foot-huntsman, as was then the general practice."

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[a] Undoubtedly Sheffield may claim *that* merit, the cleverness and pretensions of the sculptor's aunt in modelling butter notwithstanding. There is only one link in this chain of assumed feminine descent of Chantrey's genius wanting, viz. evidence that his aunt was the identical damsel whose talent in the art in question is so amusingly recorded in Smith's Life of Nollekins, vol. i. p. 103. But in reference to this and similar apocryphal anecdotes of the artist's boyhood, see Holland's "Memorials of Chantrey."

[b] Of whom there is a portrait at Norton.

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circumstances very early in life may have taught his eye to look at forms as subjects for his thought, his pencil, or his hand, it was in Sheffield, after he had been called hither from the honourable occupation of husbandry, which 'kings and the awful fathers of mankind' of old did not disdain to follow, — it was in Sheffield that his genius first began to exercise its plastic powers, both in painting and in sculpture. It was in Sheffield that the glorious alternative was presented to him, either to be one among the greatest painters of the age, or to be one alone as the greatest of its sculptors. It was in Sheffield, likewise, after he had made the wiser choice, that he produced his first work in marble; and Sheffield possesses that work, and, I trust, will possess it till the hand of time, atom by atom, shall have crumbled it to dust.

"While Chantrey was yet a youth, and resident here, there came to the town a statuary of some talent, who taught him as much as he himself knew of the manual and technical arts of modelling and carving in stone. This gentleman executed the two small figures that stand in niches on either side of the doors of our Infirmary. Several years afterwards, when Mr. Chantrey, having improved himself by attendance at the Royal Academy, returned to Sheffield, he modelled four busts of well-known characters here, as large as life. These were such masterly performances, that when it was resolved to erect a monument to the memory of the late Rev. James Wilkinson, and Chantrey (though he had never yet lifted a chisel to marble) had the courage to become a candidate for the commission, it was readily entrusted to him by the Committee, at the head of whom was the late Dr. Browne, the liberal friend of genius, whether native or adopted, whenever he found it in Sheffield. This, assuredly, was the most interesting crisis of the artist's life — the turning point that should decide the bias of his future course. Having employed a marble-mason to rough-hew the whole, he commenced his task. With a hand trembling, yet determined, an eye keenly looking after the effect of every stroke, and a mind

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flushed with anticipation, yet fluctuating often between hope and fear, doubt, agony, and rapture, — perplexities that always accompany *conscious* but *untried* power in the effort to do some great thing, — he pursued his solitary toil, day by day, and night after night, till the form being slowly developed, at length the countenance came out of the stone, and looked its parent in the face! — To know *his* joy, a man must have been *such* a parent. The throes and anguish, however, of that first birth of his genius in marble enabled that genius thenceforward, with comparative ease, to give being and body to its mightiest conceptions.

"Were I a rich man, who could purchase the costly labours of such a master, I almost think that I could forego the pride of possessing the most successful effort of his later hand, for the nobler pleasure of calling my own the precious bust in yonder church. Works of genius and of taste are not to be valued solely according to their abstract excellence as such, but they may become inestimably more dear to the heart, as well as interesting to the eye, in proportion as they awaken thought, feeling, recollection, sympathy, — whether in alliance with the subject itself, the circumstances under which it was undertaken, or the conflict and triumph of the artist in achieving his design. In all these points the plain but admirable monument before us transcends every other that has come or can come from the same hand, since the experienced and renowned proficient can never again be placed on a trial so severe, with an issue so momentous, as the youthful aspirant, unknown and unpractised, had to endure in this first essay of his skill on the block that might eternise his name or crush his hopes for ever. This, I believe, is the true history of the outset of Mr. Chantrey, a native of this neighbourhood, who was destined thenceforward at his pleasure to give to marble all *but* life, for

> ——————— "'What fine chisel
> Could ever yet *cut breath?*'
>
> "Shakspeare's *Winter's Tale.*

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"I should not have done justice to my theme this day,—after contending that the bulk of the people of Sheffield might bear away the palm of general knowledge from the most enlightened nations of antiquity,—if I had not shown, by these examples of our illustrious contemporaries, that Hallamshire is as capable of giving birth to men of genius as were Egypt, Greece, and Rome, when Literature and Philosophy flourished most among their privileged orders. This neighbourhood, therefore, is well prepared to found and carry on, with credit and advantage, the Institution now proposed."

Montgomery afterwards recollected that to this list of illustrious names belonging to Hallamshire, he might have added that of Mr. Lindley, the inimitable performer on the violoncello, who was born at Attercliffe.

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